



ZIFF DAVIS

N64 • Gamecube • PS one • PS2 • Xbox • Dreamcast • Handheld

74
REVIEWS
The Most
Ever!

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

NUMBER 138

Twisted
Metal:
BLACK

Sweet Tooth strikes
back on PlayStation 2

Reviewed:
Driver 2, **Pokémon**
Gold & Silver and
Jet Grind Radio

Quake III on SegaNet
Holiday hit or just a turkey?

January 2001
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DISPLAY UNTIL JANUARY 8

Xbox

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Bentley, the yeti with a mean left hook.



SpYRO gets totally vert.



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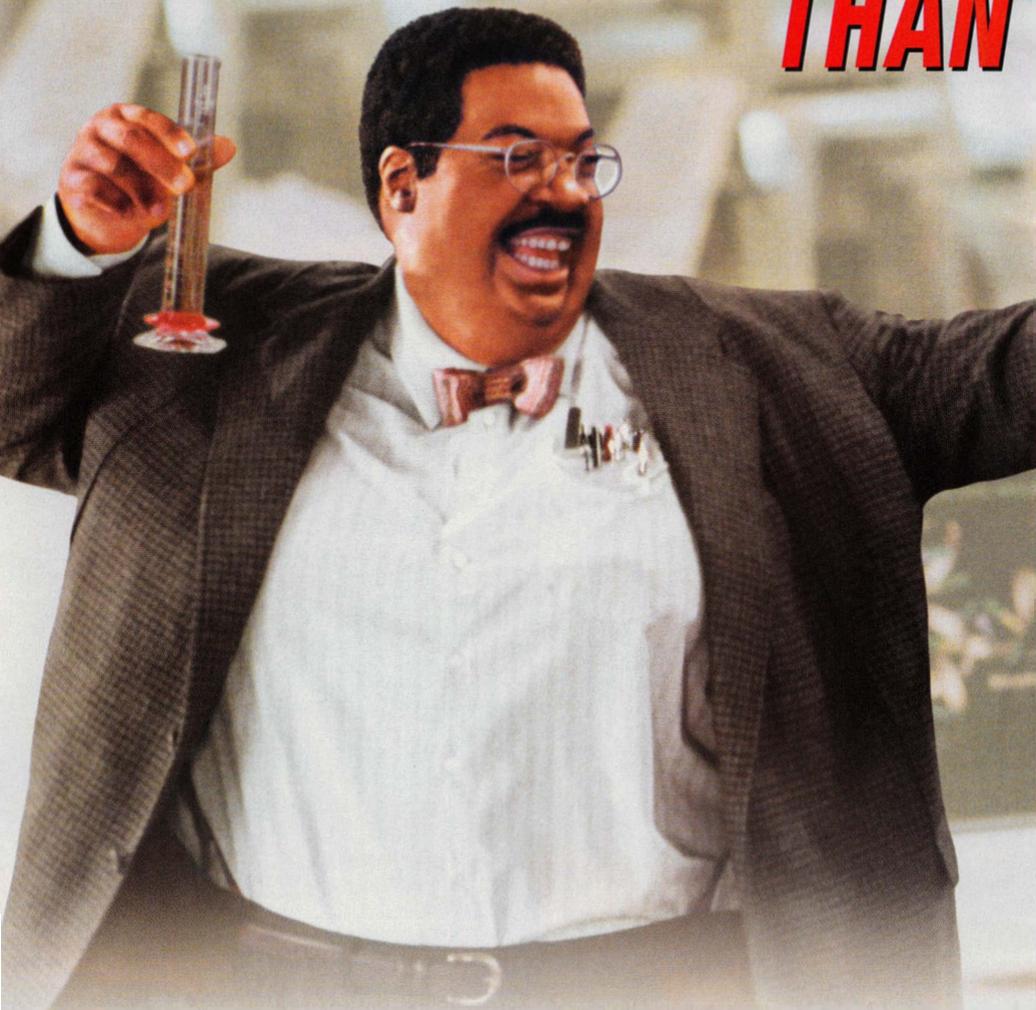


Danger on the high seas.

Things are heating up. Celebrate the Year of the Dragon with Spyro as he joins forces with four new playable critters. Blaze through bigger worlds. Drive tanks, subs, speedboats, even launch rockets. Duke it out in the boxing ring or pull off sick tricks on your skateboard. Keep cool. It doesn't get any hotter than this.



**FOR PLAYSTATION 2,
THAN**

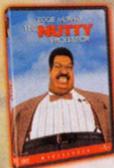
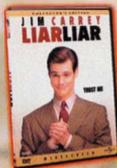
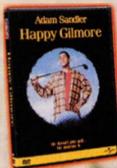
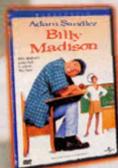


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Screens shown were taken from the PC version of the game.



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RUBBERUS

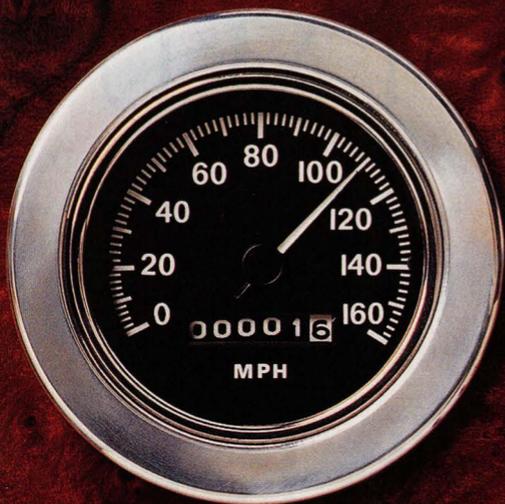
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THE WALL. WORKIN' YOUR WAY
TO FLAG-TO-FLAG DOMINATION.
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EASPORTS.COM AOL KEYWORD: EA SPORTS



007

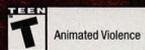


STINGER MISSILE



EJECTION SEAT

PAY ATTENTION, 007. Q-BRANCH HAS RE-ENGINEERED YOUR FAVORITE EXOTIC MOTORCARS AND EQUIPPED THEM WITH WEAPONS AND GADGETS GALORE. YOU'LL NEED THEM FOR YOUR NEXT ASSIGNMENT TO ENSURE THE STABILITY OF THE CIVILIZED WORLD. AND NEED I REMIND YOU 007, TRY TO BRING THEM BACK IN ONE PIECE.



PlayStation 2



007.EA.COM

AOL KEYWORD: 007 RACING

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DRIVER A

- Greets colleagues with a firm self-confident handshake.
- Dated cheerleaders in high school.
- Has lipstick on underwear.
- Smokes after sex.

MSR

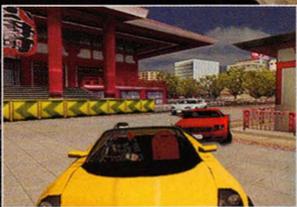
METROPOLIS STREET RACER

Welcome to Metropolis Street Racer where going fast isn't enough, you've gotta go fast and look good. MSR is the only racing game where you're judged on KUDOs (points based on style) as well as speed. MSR also features amazing recreations of real cities: London, Tokyo, and San Francisco. So check out Metropolis Street Racer and see if you've got what it takes to maintain an image at 180 mph.



DRIVER B

- Offers a limp and clammy handshake that screams of self doubt.
- Wasn't allowed to date in high school.
- Has superheroes on underwear.
- Apologizes after sex.



 Dreamcast

sega.com/msr

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fear effect 2
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Game Directory

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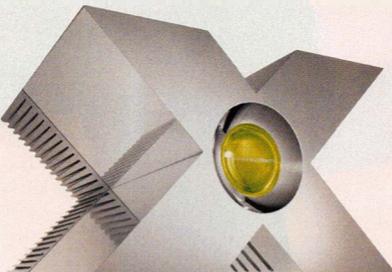
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Illustration by Kevin Llewellyn

The EGM Stick 50 For the third year in a row, we pick the 50 slickest developers, games, genres, people and gadgets in the video game biz. It's 20 pages of stuff that'll affect you and the games you love this year, and it all begins on **page 160**.



Xbox: Console or PC-port Machine? Microsoft may be an 800-pound gorilla in the PC market, but what do these guys know about console gaming? We head to the company's HQ to investigate. **Page 156**



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Twisted Metal: Black

The original team behind Twisted Metal returns to restore the franchise that put car combat on the map. Twisted Metal: Black—due for the PS2 this summer—picks fully interactive levels, and a much darker look and feel. Read our exclusive cover story on **page 148**.

Editorial 6**Letters** 25**News** 48

PS2 launch comes and goes in the U.S., madness ensues, shortages in effect, crazy online auction prices emerge. A first look at Angelina Jolie's shorts... oh, and Tomb Raider: The Movie. 2. Eternal in video game soundtracks. Shock! Sega to finally do games for other systems?

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Evil Dead: Hail to the King, Tomb Raider Chronicles, Lunar 2: Eternal Complete, Resident Evil 2 DC, Resident Evil 3 DC, El Dorado Gate Vol. 1, Gundam Battle Assault, MDK2 Armageddon, Last Blade, The Getaway.

Review Crew 192

It's a damn good month for DC owners: Shenmue, Skies of Arcadia, NBA 2K1, MSR, Jet Grind Radio, Quake III Arena, Samba de Amigo. Plus Driver 2, Hey You, Pikachu!, TimeSplitters, Unreal Tournament, and a whole slew of spunky new PS2 titles.

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The lads discuss how much fun it is to stand around in the rain like a pack of fools, camping out for PS2s on launch day. Please, sir, may I have another?

SYSTEM KEY

	Dreamcast
	Nintendo 64
	PlayStation 2
	Game Boy Color
	Arcade

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

THIS IS NO GAME

NEW LINE CINEMA PRESENTS A SWEETPEA ENTERTAINMENT/SILVER PICTURES PRODUCTION

IN ASSOCIATION WITH BEHAVIOUR WORLDWIDE A COURTNEY SOLOMON FILM "DUNGEONS & DRAGONS" JUSTIN WHALIN MARLON WAYANS THORA BIRCH

ZOE MCELLEAN KRISTEN WILSON LEE ARENBERG WITH BRUCE PAYNE AND JEREMY IRONS PRODUCED BY BRUCE PERRINI WRITTEN BY CAROLINE ROSS DIRECTED BY DOUG MILSOME, BVC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JUSTIN CAINE BURNETT PRODUCED BY STATION X STUDIOS, LLC BASED UPON CHARACTERS CREATED BY STEVE RICHARDS ADAPTED BY JOEL SILVER ALLAN ZEMAN NELSON LEONG WRITTEN BY TOPPER LILLEN & CARROLL CARTWRIGHT

PRODUCED BY KIA JAM TOM HAMMILL IN THEATERS DECEMBER 8 DIRECTED BY COURTNEY SOLOMON

MPAA RATED PG-13 PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED FOR SOME MATERIAL INCLUDING LANGUAGE, ACTION AND DRUG USE
 AMERICA ONLINE KEYWORD: DND INTERNET KEYWORD: DND
 NEW LINE CINEMA
 SILVER PICTURES
 SWEETPEA ENTERTAINMENT

THE GRINCH™



As the grumpy Grinch, your **mission** is clear.

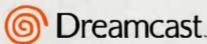
To **Slime**, stomp and Smash everything far and near.

With Gizmos and **Gadgets**, a heart that's too small

Disrupt all in **Whoville**, from short Whos to tall.

And why should your grinchy ways bring such **pride**?

For that warm, **fuzzy** feeling it gives you inside.



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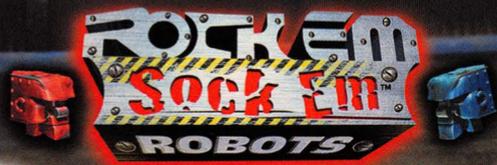
A green, grumpy-looking creature with yellow eyes and a small smile, holding a large yellow scroll. The scroll is titled 'To Do List' and contains several tasks. The creature is holding a pencil in its right hand, ready to write.

To Do List

- Rotten Egg Target Practice
- Test Rocket Spring on Max
- Grease Copter Propeller
- Triple-Check Love Shield
- Practice Grinchy Looks
- Buy Tub-O-Slime

You see yourself
as a great warrior...

Your opponents see
you as spare parts.



ARENA



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10 menacing robots, each with its own special way to turn enemies into scrap metal.



Devastate your opponent with weaponry like missiles, flame throwers and lasers.



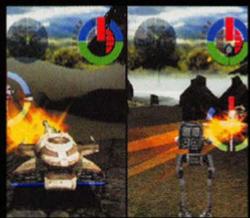
Learn incredible combo moves that will make your competitor's head spin (if it's still attached).



Rock 'Em Sock 'Em™ Robots Arena gives you the power to rip off your opponent's body parts and attach them to yourself. Turn your enemy into rubbish with their own weapons. Or save the parts you collect for future victims. The more you win, the more powerful you become. You're not just competing for pride and honor, you're fighting for limbs.

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away.

TOTAL



Animated Violence



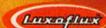
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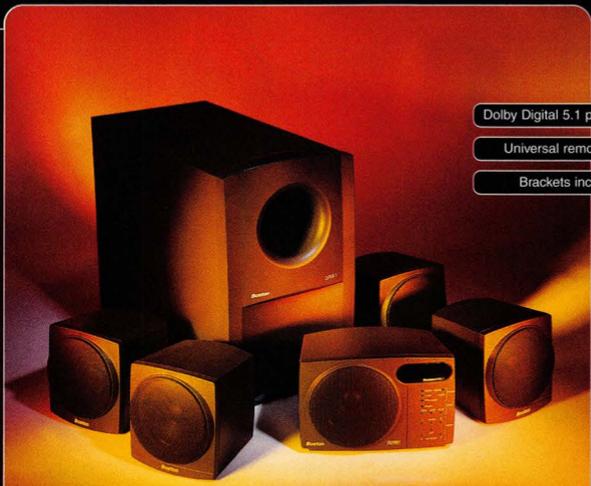
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Boston

LETTER FACTS

- References to underpants: 4
- Readers with hobbies involving pipe cleaners: 1
- Letters about B.J. Hill: 97
- Number of letters from prison: 6
- Readers pitching their own video game ideas: 74



Letters to the Editors

LETTER OF THE MONTH

PS2 Buyer Reports Feeling Extremely Underwhelmed

Well, I waited in line on 10/26/00 for six hours to get my hands on the so-called "revolutionary entertainment PS2 console." I purchased SSK, Madden 2001 and Ridge Racer V. Pushing my DC aside, I booted my PS2 up and began playing. The only thing jawdropping about the games and the system is how immensely disappointing they are. PS2 is revolutionary? A DC killer? Give me a break. There was no WOW factor

Congratulations. You win an InterAct controller. You will be receiving a Barracuda (PS), an Alloy Arcade Stick (DC) or a SharkPad Pro 64" (N64).

See page 233 for official rules.



like I experienced at the DC launch. Soul Calibur, NFL 2k1, Sonic, Hydro Thunder WOWED the hell out of me. PS2 offered rehash after rehash of older games, and didn't make me say WOW or SHAWEEE! once. Sony hyped this thing to be so much more powerful than the DC, and clearly it's not. The DC can easily do RRV and SSK. Madden may be a touch prettier, but who cares, it's not online! Yeah, detail may be stunning on replays, but again, who cares, it doesn't increase gameplay. If the PS2 is incredibly more powerful than the DC, it hasn't shown it one bit, and I don't think it will. Sony pumped us full of hype with this thing and we gobbled it up like a Thanksgiving turkey. I always wondered

You had us right up 'til Kiss Psycho Circus. Seriously though, we got a lot of letters this month expressing disappointment in the PS2. No doubt much of it can be blamed on the incredible hype that built up to its launch—easily the most any console

why when they showed demo pics of games, it was always a PC pic or FMV. Now I know why, 'cause they didn't want the public to go buy a DC. The DC lineup is looking incredible, while the PS2 is looking boring and stale. Now that the PS2 is out for all to see, gamers will realize that Sega's machine can equal the PS2 graphically, but has better games, and delivers a great online gaming experience. Sega Dreamcast will be around for quite a while. Sure, I'll buy a PS2 in about a year or so, when the price becomes reasonable, and they make fun games that make it worth the purchase. Oh yeah, I said I bought a PS2. I took it back today, preordered Shenmue, Half Life,

"A DC killer? Give me a break. There was no WOW factor like I experienced in the DC launch. Soul Calibur, NFL 2K1, Sonic, Hydro Thunder WOWED the hell out of me."

NBA 2k1, Speed Devils Online, Unreal Tournament, Kiss Psycho Circus and Tony Hawk 2. Beat that Sony.

Bill J Leigh
sos86@juna.com



You returned your PS2 for this?

has ever experienced. Objectively, the PS2 already has solid sports, racing, fighting and first-person shooting titles. But, like any other system, it will take time before you see the real killer games that truly take advantage of the new hardware.

OOOPS! Corrections:

Last month, we forgot to thank the folks who lent us their rare peripherals for our feature on oddball game gadgets. We'd like to extend our gratitude to John

Hardie, Al Backiel, Mike Etlar and Curt Vendel. Without them, we'd never have gotten such great shots of the Mindlink, Unroller Controller, PGP-1, Nintendo's R.O.B. and the rare Jaguar VR Helmet. Thanks guys!

Reader Demands Fiery Sacrifice

I AM PHIL. I BOUGHT THE OCTOBER ISSUE OF EGM. THE COVER IS OF ZELDA, BUT THE ONLY THING IN THE WHOLE MAGAZINE ABOUT ZELDA IS AN ARTICLE ABOUT THREE SENTENCES LONG. IF I WERE YOU GUYES I WOULD



This is the picture "Phil" demanded we accept.

GO HOME AND SET MYSELF ON FIRE. ARE YOU CONTRIBUTING TO MY DELINQUENCY ON PURPOSE? WHY MUST YOU MOCK PHIL? NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE IS SAID TO HAVE MUCH INFO ON PS2. THIS PLEASES PHIL. DO NOT FAIL ME, OR VENGEANCE WILL BE SOUGHT. PLEASE ACCEPT PICTURES OF DOG. P.S. I AM NOT A MORON.

Phil Benedictti
Bloomfield Hills, MI

We gladly accept "pictures of dog" Phil, and we set Jon Dudlak on fire as per your request (since he's the rookie). Your use of all caps suggests you are trying to convey a terse tone in your letter. So let us clarify things in hopes of calming your ass down: The cover you speak of was a fall preview feature covering 40+ games, Zelda being but one component. And as a loyal reader, we are sure you have seen our exhaustive coverage of the wee lad. We hope this appeases you, and will put your arsonous soul at ease.

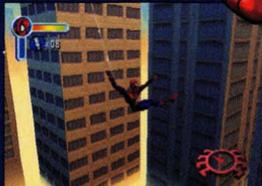
Garlic, Gauntlets and Underpants

Will someone please slap Sega upside the head. Then have all the members of management stuff their underwear with garlic and onions. Then



"...the best superhero game ever..."

OPM
August 2000



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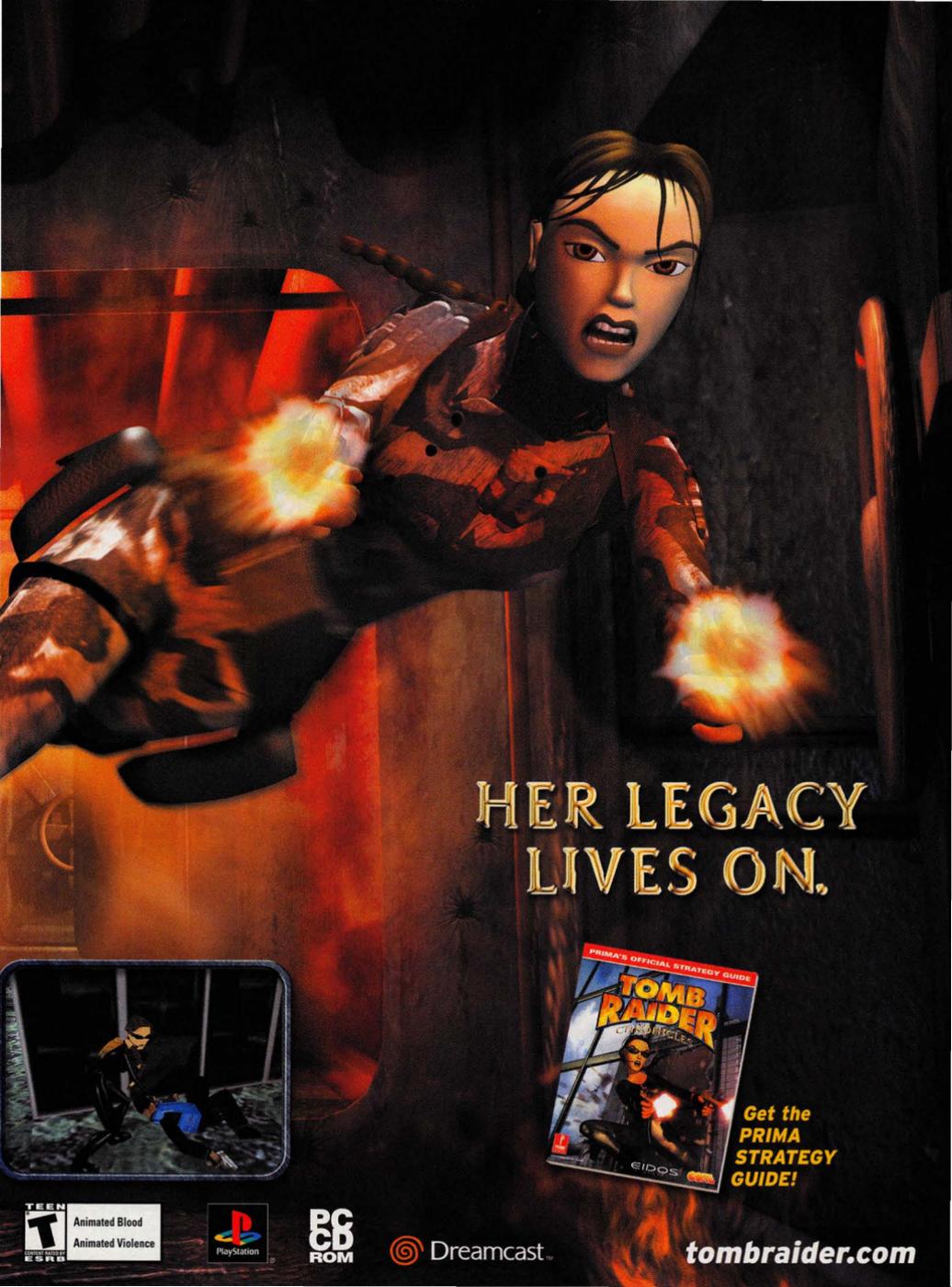


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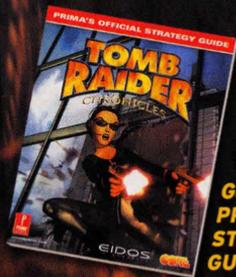
TOMB RAIDER CHRONICLES

In light of Lara's recent disappearance, those closest to her gather together at the Croft Estate on a gray, rainy day for a memorial service in her honor. Afterwards, the friends sit quietly together in the study of the Croft Mansion and provide new insights about Lara's past exploits that have until now remained a secret...

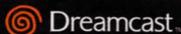
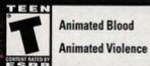




HER LEGACY
LIVES ON.

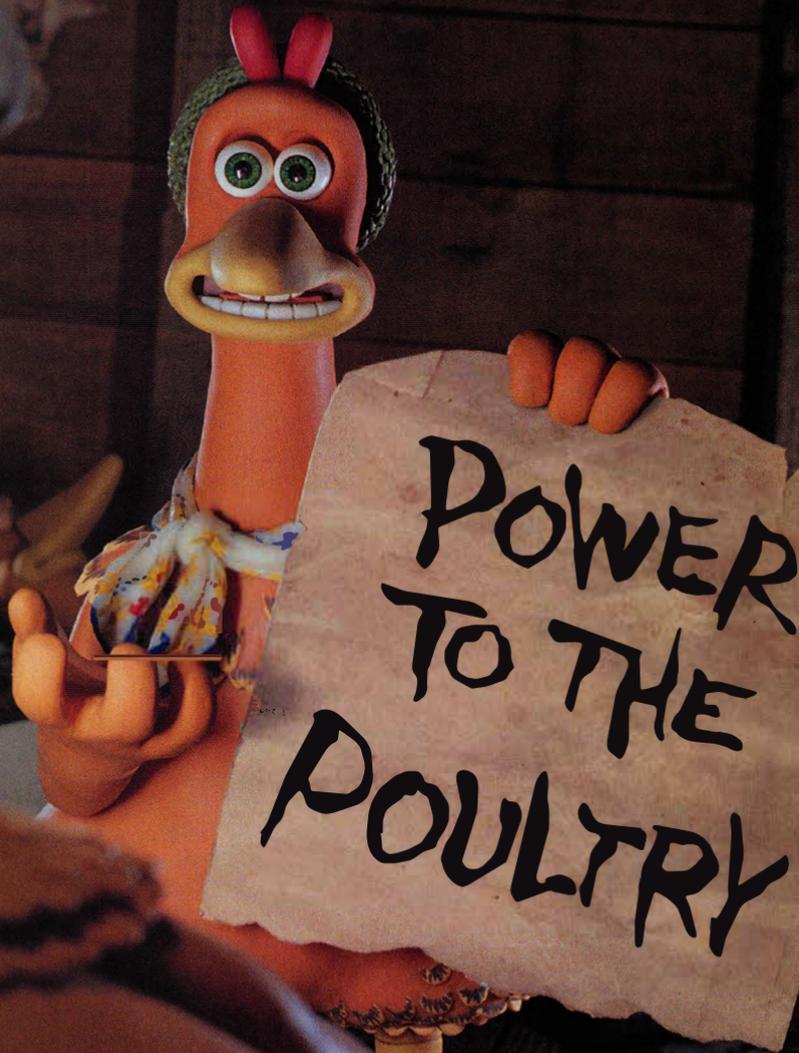


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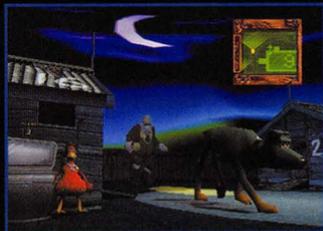
 Aardman

 e
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PATHE!

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"Chicken Gear Solid"
- IGN.com



All the action and suspense of the movie, but now you're the one running for your life.



Nick, Billmay! A pair of binoculars... did you see that Fetcher?!

Hear the voices of Chicken Run characters as you help them escape the evil farmers.

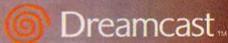


Encounter tons of mini games as you play - a hilarious way to hone your escape skills.

CHICKEN RUNTM

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Endless Adventure



All-New Characters



Improved Battle System

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Animated Violence
Mild Language

FINAL FANTASY IX

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for a world of mystery and magic
for a journey of danger and discovery
for characters you'll never forget
for the most amazing adventure ever



Countless Interactions



Amazing CG Cinemas



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WE'LL TAKE YOU THERE

You can write EGM at:

EGM Letters
P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338
e-mail: EGM@ziffdavis.com

Please note: We reserve the right to edit any correspondence for space purposes. If you don't want your name, city/state or e-mail address printed, tell us so (but please include your phone number and mailing address for Letter of the Month consideration).

people have a lot of time on their hands. Speaking of which, do not send us e-mail asking us where to find the data, instructions for doing this, etc. We are still getting letters for the original Tomb Raider nude code for cryin' out loud.

EGM Encouraged to "Slow Down"

December magazine already?! And talking about January 2001, it's not even November yet! Why are your magazine dates so far ahead? It's getting confusing. Make the next magazine November V2.0 or something and wait for the rest of us to get into the year 2001.

James Davis
tobriand@erictan.tierranet.com

Actually James, we are right on schedule to in fact "lap" our selves and eventually get a full year ahead of the rest of the world. This will enable us to cover the latest developments in the gaming world before the companies even think of them.

Reader Mad About B.J.

I am absolutely furious at B.J. Hill's attempt at intelligent insight on your magazine (See Letters, EGM #136). Listen buddy, if you want a catalogue, buy a catalogue, but don't sit there and try to conform a magazine to your own personal tastes. I'm sure every reader has their sections they like and dislike. If I'm not mistaken, the magazine is called *Electronic Gaming Monthly*, and that gives me the idea there is going to be coverage on every aspect of gaming. That includes fan art, letters from readers (uhh like yours), etc. Oh and you don't wanna hear about E3 but you want coverage on the hottest new games and which to buy. It's about time YOU cut the crap because that makes absolutely no sense.

Personally, as a game developer I enjoy reading articles about game developers, how the industry is doing, and what areas of employment are

"If I'm not mistaken the magazine is called **Electronic Gaming Monthly**, and that gives me the idea that there is going to be coverage on every aspect of gaming."

hot/not. I've never written to a gaming magazine until I was utterly disgusted at your letter, so in response, I have a few ideas for you, Mr. Air Force:

1. Stop thinking that your wasted space in a magazine is gonna change a darn thing.
2. Admit that you are jealous of those girls of summer because they don't like your Depends.
3. Stop expecting Bach and Mozart to be advertised in our magazine.
4. Quit complaining that you don't have an ounce of artistic skill in your body.
5. Buy some friggin' glasses so you can read red and blue, being these colors are soooooo uncommon.
6. Crawl back into your cockpit with your latest *Readers Digest* and leave us gamers the hell alone.

Colin Payette
cpayette@newwinemusic.com

The letter Mr. Hill wrote us garnered more responses than any other letter has in recent history here at EGM, and possibly ever. Colin's response is, believe it or not, fairly mild compared to the bulk of them. And while there were some who wrote in support of B.J., most

readers pretty much had their shorts in a knot over the "critique." Like we said before, he made some good points and in fact may have already been brought in as a consultant. Hey, you haven't seen any pictures of editors picking their noses or goosing each other lately have you? 'Nuff said.

Reader Requests Parking Lot Sim

Hey guys, wouldn't it be cool to have a game called "Super Wal-Mart Parking Lot Deluxe"? You drive around in the parking lot, looking for a space to park your gigantic SUV, and you get points for parking as close as possible to the store entrance.

bib_fortuna@hotmail.com

Crispin's way ahead of you on this one, partner. Hot on the heels of his runaway sensation *Monster Parties*, he has been flooded with cash and scripts for new projects. One of these involves the exact scenario you mentioned above, except his version features a teen center and a '74 Gran

LETTER ART

WINNER

Ashley Cline
National City, CA
It ain't exactly a letter, but it did come in an envelope. This awesome Link made from pipecleaners takes top honors this month.



It features rapid-fire controls for all buttons and slow motion for those intense moments.



Congratulations! Your prize is on the way—an ASCII Specialized Control Pad for the PlayStation.

Put your creative skills to the test by decking out a #10 envelope (the long business type) with your own unique touch. Send your letter art to:

EGM Letter Art
PO Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL
60522-3338

(All entries become the property of Ziff Davis Media Inc. and will not be returned.)

Close, but no controller
Good, but not quite good enough.



Derrick Louw
Johannesburg, South Africa



Robert Cumbers
Lodi, CA

WHO SAID FANTASIES HAD TO BE FINAL?

"WONDERFUL VISUALS OF AN EXPANSIVE NEW ENVIRONMENT TEEMING WITH FANCIFUL MAGIC AND FASCINATING MONSTERS."

— GAMER'S REPUBLIC

A young magician is sent by his King to investigate the strange happenings on the Island of No Return. Armed with his sword and his natural talent as a sorcerer, Cain attempts to be the first person to return from the island alive. Legend has it that magical powers are at rest on this island.

It is inhabited by numerous beasts, enormous dragons, and magical items that were supposed to be buried long ago. As Cain, the player must solve several baffling scenarios whilst keeping his hide intact in his search for the ultimate magic ring.

- Enhanced polygon graphics of giant dragons and enemies in a completely 3D world.
- Real time atmospheric effects include time of day and weather FX.
- Collect multiple magic rings to build an arsenal of offensive and defensive spells.
- First-person perspective in an RPG adventure where your combat skills will rely more on magic than swordplay.

ETERNAL RING™

FROMSOFTWARE™



Terrifying monsters inhabit the island of No Return



Gather magic rings to cast devastating spells



First-person view requires precise combat skills

AS A MEMBER OF A RUTHLESS GANG OF SMUGGLERS, IT'S YOUR JOB TO EVADE THE U.S. BORDER PATROL, CIA AND CUTTHROAT RIVALS TO DELIVER ILLEGAL CARGO. IT'LL TAKE COMPLETE MASTERY OF YOUR OFF-ROAD VEHICLE TO MAKE IT ACROSS UNFORGIVING TERRAIN AND STAY ONE STEP AHEAD OF THE FORCES OUT TO DESTROY YOU.

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Animated Violence

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"...instantly intelligible, mind-bogglingly vast, and a total gas to play...makes for one helluva videogame" - Gamer's Republic, Sept 2000

"Must Buy Playstation 2 Launch Games list"
- Nov 2000 EGM

"driving through the spectacular terrain is a blast" - EGM October 2000

"A - ...the best display and truest testament to the processing power of the PS2 to date."
- Gamers Republic October 2000

98% Platinum - "the best off-road experience you've ever had" ... "one of the must - buy launch games" - PSE2 November 2000



SMUGGLER'S RUN

Levels are over 5 square miles, each with a "drive anywhere" environment filled with other smugglers and law enforcement officials.

Choose from 35 different vehicles, each with unique modifications and strengths.

Compete head-to-head or run "pick up and deliver" missions against AI opponents or in full multiplayer mode.

Maneuver your way through arid desert, icy tundra, or rocky mountain forest.

Real Time Damage Models allow you to watch the parts fly as you pay the price for punishing collisions!

SOUNDTRACK AVAILABLE ON GUIDANCE RECORDINGS





LETTERS



You Make The List

OK, last month it was your top 5 favorite racing games. This month we want to know what you think the top 5 sports games of all time are. Send your picks to: EDM@ziffdavis.com
subject heading: **SPORTS GAMES**

Fury. He's still developing the lead character as of press time, but so far he's settled on: a) stained tank top, b) foam-in-front, mesh-in-back baseball hat, and of course c) the obligatory mullet, so pretty that it brings tears to your eyes.

Boong Ga Boong Ga Demand Surges

I must say that in all my years of gaming, in all my years of funky peripherals (I still bust out the old U-Force for games like Top Gun once in a while), I have NEVER been as transfixed as when I turned to page 37 in your December issue. No, I'm not talking about the Manned Crate-dipper, nor the amazingly realistic Ben Hur 2000. No, I'm talking about "Boong Ga Boong Ga," a game of which I had never heard, and the picture you posted which has transfixed me night and day since the issue came to my humble mailbox.

What the heck is this game? I must know! I know the Japanese get an awful lot of funky titles that we Yanks are just not privy to, but this surely must take the cake. A platform with a virtual butt on it, tight jeans and the

catchphrase, "Have Fun!" at the bottom—ZOUNDS, what could it all mean? PLEASE do some kind of preview or at least a couple more snippets on this funky, funky game. Let us know just how this "ass-poking sim" really works.

Adam Tierney
salstادتx@hotmail.com

OK, first off, it's "Have o fun!", as is often quoted around the EGM offices. And what is all the excitement about? We've seen this kind of game 100 times before: You pick a victim character, grab the

controller—shaped like a human hand with a finger pointing out, as usual—and jam it as hard as you can into the giant ass in jeans in front of you. The face then reacts and you get a score based on how hard you crammed that gram. So what?

Pervert Seeks Adult-Only Games

Where are all of the adult video games?! I'm not talking blood and guts stuff...I'm talking sex, baby! Computer owners have access to them so why can't anyone else? I mean, all we are fighting games with a woman in a bikini or something lame like that! I'm a pervert you say? Well yes sometimes...OK a lot of the time...OK most of the time...I am, but at least I'm being honest. And I would GUARANTEE you that if someone finally had the grapefruits to make and develop an adult video game that it would sell. Even just for the single fact that it's something new. And I also GUARANTEE you that just about every guy, and some girls too, (but hey, I'm not a girl so I'm not sure) are reading this and thinking the exact same thing. It's about time we used that scary little rating "Adults Only" on a video game. Come on now, what's the point in having it if everyone is afraid to use it? People in the video game industry sure like talking about breaking new ground, well I just laid some new ground down for you, so start breaking!

my_stupid_nic@webtv.net

Your letter is disgusting, yes, reprehensible. Even if such vulgar titles existed, we would never tell you. No matter how desperately we also wanted these titles. Not even if some of us longed to have our loneliest nights filled with hot, steamy games so dirty you could scrub for days and not get clean, not even then would we bow to your insidious pleas for these vile creations.

"A platform with a virtual butt on it, tight jeans and the catchphrase, "Have Fun!" at the bottom—ZOUNDS, what could it all mean?"

Question of the Moment

What do you think about Nintendo's Gamecube?

Gamecube is THE system!!! Let's see... PS2, a \$300 DVD player with 1/2 completed games. Xbox?! Look Ma, a computer that uses your TV as a monitor (a lot of \$ too!). Of course there's Dreamcast. But then again...it's Sega.
spiderman_d2001@yahoo.com

Gamecube is gonna rock!
noe.casas@worldnet.att.net

I think Nintendo's Gamecube will blow everything else out of the water! I have seen demos for Legend of Zelda, Metroid and Luigi's Mansion. They are unbelievable!! It's good to see the under-appreciated plumber get his own game.
Kamikazejet@yahoo.com

Nothing, it doesn't come out 'til 2001!
Nyseguy2001@aol.com

N-Cube? Same sh@#, better graphics. Nintendo needs to get down with some serious games to get more people to pay attention to them. Graphics alone don't make consoles better.
solid_sephiroth@hotmail.com

I think it'll bite Xbox's dust. The only good thing about the cube is the Mario games and Zelda. I find it quite odd that they're the only ones not using DVD-ROM. Xbox is just superior! The specs say it all!
Humpty-Dumpty@Mr-potatohead.com

I think the Gamecube will put the "soul" back in console!
jaysy@gamespotmail.com

There is one word and one word only to describe the Nintendo Gamecube: Fugly!
jeff_sc123@hotmail.com

Next month's question of the moment:

Did you have a positive or negative PS2 launch day experience?

Send your short but sweet responses to:
EGM@ziffdavis.com with the subject heading:

Launch Day

SHORTS

From those with very little on their minds.

You should have a TV show and the E-Sak host it.
Jeff Mann
exare_20@hotmail.com

You got it, chief. Look for "Sak Talk" on the WB next fall.

You guys should make Gilla Mobster your official mascot.

Vandalv1v1@aol.com

We already tried that, my man.

But Hsu and Chan's Siegat dream team are frickin' predators.



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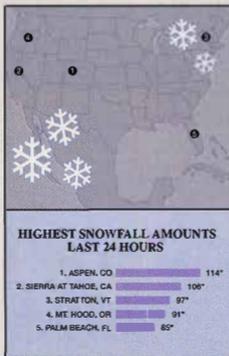
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Nashville Snow 32/29 Tuesday: Snow 28/17 Wednesday: Snow 24/18 SQL: Hard Pack	New York Snow 31/22 Tuesday: Snow 35/25 Wednesday: Snow 34/20 SQL: Fresh Powder	Philadelphia Snow 34/25 Tuesday: Snow 30/25 Wednesday: Snow 33/25 SQL: Hard Pack	Phoenix Snow 20/18 Tuesday: Snow 32/15 Wednesday: Snow 32/14 SQL: Fresh Powder	Portland Snow 30/8 Tuesday: Snow 25/12 Wednesday: Snow 26/12 SQL: Icy	Salt Lake City Snow 32/10 Tuesday: Snow 27/18 Wednesday: Snow 24/14 SQL: Fresh Powder	San Francisco Snow 20/2 Tuesday: Snow 18/4 Wednesday: Snow 12/2 SQL: Hard Pack	St. Louis Snow 30/18 Tuesday: Snow 28/16 Wednesday: Snow 24/12 SQL: Fresh Powder	Tampa Snow 30/12 Tuesday: Snow 20/2 Wednesday: Snow 24/8 SQL: Hard Pack	Washington D.C. Snow 30/22 Tuesday: Snow 33/15 Wednesday: Snow 29/2 SQL: Fresh Powder
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Weekend sports weather

Blizzards in the Pacific North west could hamper snowboarders Kevin Jones and Tara Dakides as they defend their titles at the Mt. Hood Pro Invitational... For the third straight week, football stadium attendance will be significantly lower due to heavy snow... Record crowds should continue at mountain resorts nationwide.



Jones



Dakides

TODAY'S SNOW QUALITY INDEX (SQI)		
Powder: A perfect time to use a sick day.	Hard Pack: A prime opportunity to work on your half-pipe prowess.	Icy: A bad day riding still beats a great day working.



Today through Sunday outlook: Mostly awesome amounts of up-to-your-ears fresh powder. East, west, north, south and everywhere in between. No end in sight. Is your board waxed?

Hey, anything's possible.

The forecast calls for whatever your sick little mind can imagine. From falling snow to insanely realistic motion captures, we put you on the mountain. Break off gravity-defying tricks and grabs in over 20 huge, obstacle-laden courses. Shred deep powder with 10 top pros, including Todd Richards, Kevin Jones, Barrett Christy and Tara Dakides. Six killer events, including a wicked Pro Challenge Mode. The weather gods have spoken. Get out and worship.



CoolBoarders 2001
LIVE TO BOARD



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CRASH IS READY FOR BATTLE. ARE YOU?

It's time to separate the men

from the scared little boys. Crash and his friends are back in a knock-down-drag-out arena-style rumble. Blow stuff up in a tank, toss TNT and engage

in some good old-fashioned hand-to-hand combat. Brawl on a floating iceberg and duke it out in a jungle. Just watch out for the falling anvils. Fight solo

or plug in a Multitap and embarrass your friends. Wimps need not apply. Sure, this isn't conventional warfare but, then again, Crash isn't a conventional bandicoot.



ONLY THE STRONG SURVIVE.



Sir Maximilian



Sir Ferdinand I



Sir Pedro II



Sir Charles V

Guess which emperor needs your help? Emperor Kuzco is having a bad day—

it seems he's been turned into a llama. It's your job to give him a hand, or, in this case, a hoof. Travel as a llama through fantastic, ancient worlds in your quest to find the magic potion that will turn Kuzco back into an emperor. Watch out, though, because you'll get turned into a turtle, a rabbit and a frog along the way. It's jammed full of wisecracking movie clips, puzzles, races and, of course, tons of llama attitude. Remember, this is one pack animal that packs a mean punch.

Disney's
THE EMPEROR'S
NEW GROOVE

See the movie in theaters
December 15, 2000



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Sir Napoleon



Sir Maximilian I



Sir Kuzco (duh...it's me.)



Sir Rudolf II





WHAT A WASTE
OF A PERFECTLY
GOOD RAIL.



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grind session.

IT'S A FREE WORLD. SKATE IT.



Defy gravity and the occasional city ordinance in eight insane locations, including true Vans Triple Crown of Skateboarding® events. Dominate the streets and leave the weak behind with six top pros: Ed Templeton, John Cardiel, Cara-Beth Burnside, Willy Santos, Missen and Daevon Song. Featuring hundreds of impossible tricks, combinations and potential bone-crushing plans. And, just as many ways to trash your buddy's ego. Your ride is here. See how sick you can get.





Press Start

The Hottest Gaming News on the Planet

LAUNCH!

Gamers endure long lines and outrageous auction prices to get their hands on PlayStation 2

Who would've thought that in America, hundreds of people would line up and stand outside overnight for a video game system. In Japan, that's a common occurrence with new video game hardware—but it's never happened before in the U.S. That is, until PlayStation 2. On Oct. 26, 2000, the first 500,000 PS2s landed in the U.S. Some got their hands on it—others walked away empty-handed.

The craziness began as early as two days prior, the night of the 24th when a line of gamers began forming outside the PlayStation Store at Sony's Metreon entertainment complex in San Francisco. By the time systems went on sale the morning of the 26th, there would be nearly 1,000 people in line. Most everywhere else in the country, the madness

didn't begin until around six that evening, when lines began forming in earnest. Wal-Mart, Target and K-Mart stores often had many more people than there were systems in each location, so they held lotteries for the few they had.

It wasn't all peace and quiet. Isolated reports invaded newswires of units getting stolen out of customers' hands and fistfights that broke out between people in line. Reports even came in of winning customers having to be escorted out of stores by security for fear they'd be attacked by the not-so-lucky.

And if you weren't one of the lucky ones to come home with a PS2 on launch day, there's always a gamer's last bastion of hope—eBay. It and other online auction sites like Yahoo! Auctions had thousands of PS2 hardware



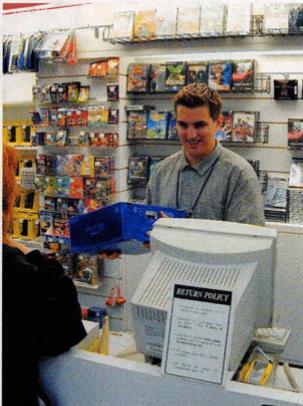
listings—some reaching insane proportions (i.e., \$10,000 for one system). While waiting in line, our staff found many people who were buying systems merely to turn around and auction them off—sometimes buying multiple machines. We couldn't help but think that if these would-be auctioneers were taken out of the equation, maybe everyone who really wanted a PS2 on launch day could've gotten one. But unfortunately, most of the crazy prices had been artificially propped by tricksters who had no intention of paying these outrageous amounts. "I did not receive the money from the high bidder. Like many PS2 auctions it was from a false bidder,"

Michael Newhouse, one of the thousands who listed his PS2 system on eBay, told us. "That was a snag, but I e-mailed some people and

Photo by Michael Sexton



Standing in line pays off—the first person out of Sony's Metreon with a PS2 system in hand lets out a victory "huzzah!" Now it's time to catch up on lost sleep, eh?



While others strolled into stores like Babbage's to pick up their preorders.

How long would you wait in line to get a PS2?

0 minutes 33%

1-2 hours 20%

8-12 hours 8%

24 hours 31%

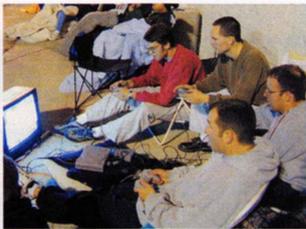
Too busy playing *Majra's Mask* 28%

Source: Videogames.com



sold it for \$650." If you were one of the ones who bid on a PS2 on eBay and didn't get your system, you're not alone. "The person I bought the system from went down to his local shipping depot. The people working there were interested because he was shipping a new PS2," eBay bidder Jennifer Fiocco told us. "He got it all packed, handed it over, and neither of us ever saw it again. We're guessing that someone else wanted a PS2 for Christmas." Online retailer amazon.com sold out of its allocation of units in 30 seconds.

Sega had no love for Sony and its PS2 production problems. Trucks carrying this billboard, proclaiming, "Our deepest condolences to Sony on their PS2 shipping difficulties," were seen prowling both Sony CEA's HQ and the parking lots of major software developers.



These guys hooked their PlayStation and TV up to a generator and spent the long evening playing *Madden 2001*.

Sony projects it'll ship a total of 3 million U.S. PS2s by March 31, despite the materials shortage that halved the initial launch shipment. Since launch, new systems have trickled into stores a few at a time, and that trend will continue at the rate of 100,000 machines a week entering distribution channels until the end of the year.

Will there ever be another hardware launch in the U.S. like the PS2 launch? Surely those who slept outside in cold weather or used empty areas behind stores as toilets (raise your hands, people) hope not. Next year we have two more new hardware launches to look forward to. Hopefully, by the time you read this, if you've been searching for a PS2, you've got one. Drop us a line and let us know what your experience hunting for a PS2 has been!



WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

Damen Donaghue,
Glen Ellyn, IL



"[The fact that it has a DVD player] helped convince my parents to pitch in a little bit—they can use it, too."

Wally Phelps,
Biloxi, MS

"On the day before launch, I went to Wal-Mart to stake out my position, but there was already a line of 60 or more and they only had 24."

Rebecca Pittman,
Bloomingdale, IL



"Better graphics, that it plays original PlayStation games and the new ones...it has USB and Firewire, DVD, everything. It's loaded."

hoochman6@juno.com

"I waited and waited and waited for NINE HOURS but I got my PLAYSTATION 2 and man, it is sweet. So all you all who thought it was foolish to wait, you don't have one!!"

Nico Delgadillo,
Bloomingdale, IL



"They did a really good job with the first system, so I'm gonna give them a second try. Plus they're coming out with some features like the DVD and better graphics and all that."

chemical36@aol.com

"Things got crazy and I got caught up in it. I didn't expect to pay \$660 [on eBay] for it. But now I sort of do feel that it was worth it. I'd rather not stand in line at Best Buy all night and end up getting screwed."

Chris Dylla,
Schaumburg, IL



"I think it'll be worth owning once they get the hard drive out, the broadband going and they start emphasizing the DVD capabilities like they will with *Metal Gear Solid 2*..."

Photo by Michael Sexton



The Metreon's pyramid of PS2s...all of which were gone by the end of the day on the 26th.



PRESS
START

Welcome to Lara Land

An On-the-Set Peek at the Tomb Raider Movie

Croft Manor is under siege again, but not by the same breed of baddie that stormed Lara's crib in the finale of *Tomb Raider II*. These are flesh-and-blood thugs, not polygonal people. And when they're done taking potshots at Lara's butler—an equally real dude returning fire from the second-floor balcony—swarms of workers emerge from the sidelines, reloading prop guns, collecting spent shells and vacuuming simulated rainfall dripping from smashed skylights.

We're at England's Pinewood Studios, on the set of Paramount's big-budget *Tomb Raider* movie, which stars Angelina Jolie and is set to hit theaters in May, just in time to give the high-octane summer-flick season a suitably explosive kick-off. Pinewood—home of the Bond films—is the largest film studio in Europe, and as we're shuttled between the production's three hangar-size soundstages, we can't help but feel we've fallen into a *Tomb Raider* game, despite the cameras, coils of cabling and scores of ambulating technicians, grips and actors. One set, a sub-Siberian tomb called the Orrery, houses an H.G. Wells-esque spinning model of the solar system the size of a city bus. Technicians will flood this set's floor with water—a process that takes a week. Another stage over, we find a life-size re-creation of a Cambodian Tomb, complete with hanging roots, 40-foot ledges, sunken



Recognize this place? The Hatfield House in Hertfordshire, England, served as the exterior of stately Croft Manor, while the house's interior was built and shot at Pinewood Studios.

passages and dozens of carvings and sculptures. "We wanted to give layers to the sets," production designer Kirk Petrucelli tells us. "Lara has to be able to climb, jump, leap, swing, do all these different things." Jolie, who does many of her own stunts in the film, adds, "Just the other day, I was hanging off a cliff and nearly fell off this thing and really nearly dropped to the floor."

Sounds like the game to us. "We even have a boss—that six-armed Buddha over there," says producer Lloyd Levin, pointing to a massive gold statue that'll be brought to computer-animated life by British effects firms Mill Film and Really Useful Companies. The movie is really Levin's baby. "Fandom came first," he says, "then pursuit, then acquisition of the rights." But Levin's also keenly aware of the history of game-to-movie translations. Super Mario Bros. sucked. Street Fighter sucked. Fair or not, game fans fear the *Tomb Raider* flick will be no different.

"She's like a creature. She's like some insane, wild animal that's on fire all the time."

—Angelina Jolie, describing her character
Lara Croft

"That would be kinda like saying there've been a couple of crappy novel-to-movie adaptations, so let's write off novels," Levin says. "I think games are a great source of characters and stories, and we have a big responsibility here to make this turn out right, so people can see the potential."

Paramount gave everyone on the set strict orders to stay mum on details of the script—which was written by director Simon West (he also did *Con Air* and *The General's Daughter*). We know Jolie's real-life poppa Jon Voight plays Lara's father, Lord Croft, and we know his character disappears early in the film. Lara will travel to Siberia and Cambodia on a quest for a time-altering artifact. She'll battle a training

continued on page 58



Here it is—the first official pic of Angelina Jolie as Lara Croft. You gotta squint your eyes, though. That's her in the center.



The Duke

DUKE AND DOOM ARE DISSED

Movies based on two popular first-person shooters, namely Duke Nukem 3-D and Doom, were originally slated to go into production. Had they gone forward they'd have been in theaters now. The Duke movie was rumored to have starred Dolph Lundgren in the lead role. We just have to ask...what kind of movie would those games make? If it's anything like watching someone else play an FPS, let's hope they would've given out Dramamine doses with each admission.

Also Coming Soon to A Screen Near You



Final Fantasy The Movie

Director: Hironobu Sakaguchi

Voice Talent: Steve Buscemi, Donald Sutherland, Alec Baldwin, Ving Rhames, Ming-na Wen, James Woods

Scheduled release: 2001

Plot: As the cream of the game movie crop, Square's been keeping the Final Fantasy movie under wraps (we'll have more details next issue), but we do know it takes place on Earth in 2065. It stars none of the characters from the games (no, not even Cid), but looking at the voice talent, you can probably draw your own conclusions about the CG players. C'mon, we don't need Disney to tell us who's in their next movie to figure out how the story's gonna end...

Pre-release Buzz: It's going to be visually spectacular, but the real question is, will anyone besides game otaku and Square fans dig it?

The House of the Dead

Producer/Director: Jesse Dylan (yes, Bob's other son)

Writer: Mark Verheiden (The Mask, Time Cop)

Scheduled release: Fall

Plot: The House of the Dead movie is allegedly based mildly on the game—only more of a serious horror movie with buckets of gore. College-age zombies dominate the social scene in a small town and a murder leads two heroes into the undead's abode to wreak some havoc on zombiekind.

Pre-release Buzz: The serious horror movie angle and the lack of established backstory in the game leaves room for good scares.



Parasite Eve

Japanese Release: Back in '97

US Release: 2001(?)

The Lowdown: Your guess is as good as ours. Rumors and speculation have followed the live-action Parasite Eve movie around from the moment it was supposed to come to the States. The rights are supposedly now in the skilled hands of anime dubbers AD Vision, who were supposed to bring it to the states this past summer and then to DVD, but it's still not out. Madonna supposedly owned the rights for a U.S. remake, but we haven't heard anything on that in awhile either.

The Buzz: The movie's really based on the novel, not the game, and we've heard a lot of fans have been disappointed by fan-subbed tapes making the rounds.



Resident Evil

Director: Paul Anderson

Release Date: November 2001

Filming Locations: England, other parts of Europe

Plot: The original Resident Evil movie story and script, written by the talented George Romero, sounded too good to be true. It was, and now Constantin Films has scrapped Romero's true-to-the-game version and handed the \$40 million project off to Paul Anderson, of *Event Horizon* and *Mortal Kombat* fame. The new script pits six people and a team of commandos (none of them characters from any of the games) against a computer-run-amok as they try to escape a house full of mutated scientists. Sounds exactly like the game right? Right? Heh heh. Ewww, boy.

Pre-release Buzz: Why did they ever ditch Romero's script? Looks like this one's got a one-way ticket to Sucksville.



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AS SEEN ON
TV

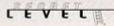
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PlayStation.2

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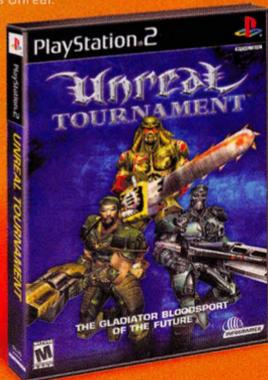
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湾岸 MIDNIGHT CLUB STREET RACING

PlayStation 2



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- Gamer's Republic, Sept 2000

"an exhilarating experience, one that you'd expect to get from the latest Hollywood big budget chase scene, Rather than a console racing game"
- Next Generation, June 2000

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PRESS
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1.4 million

POKÉMANIA

That's the number of Pokémon Gold and Silver cartridges sold in the U.S. during its first week of release.



Tomb Raider movie continued from page 50

robot in her mansion. She'll face an army of CG monkey-men warriors. She'll blast baddies from the seat of her Norton motorcycle—while wearing her pajamas, no less. And, of course, she'll perform plenty of backflips, handsprings and all that other acrobatic stuff Lara's famous for (this flick will feature loads of *Matrix*-style wire work). "Gamers won't be so fish out of water that they won't recognize anything about the movie apart from Lara's gorgeous physique," West tells us. "I purposefully put some things in it so if you're a gamer, you watch the film and she'll do something very sporadically that's definitely for you."

Of course, the most important game ingredient here isn't plot or location—it's Lara Croft herself. Jolie underwent three months of training for the role. "She can ride a motorbike. She can fight really well. She's physically very, very fit," stunt coordinator Simon Crane tells us. "We're trying to put her in the action as much as we can." Jolie stuck to a high-protein, mostly meat-and-fish diet to mold her bod to Lara's epic proportions. "We've altered her a bit," Jolie says. "She's still got a lot of what makes her Lara Croft, but I'm more athletic, and she's more curvy. I'm all for curves on a woman, and feeling sexy, and not hiding from it and kind of enjoying it, and I'm hoping that everybody will enjoy it as well."

Director West says Jolie, who has signed on for two sequels, was always his first choice to play the game's globetrotting star. "She is Lara Croft. There's very little difference between the two of them." We have to agree. We watched Jolie film several scenes, and not only does she get the accent nailed, too. "[Lara's] raised a certain way," Jolie says, "she's had a certain breeding, and she is Lady

Croft. But I didn't want her to be an unapproachable kind of snobbish aristocrat. So we had to take pieces of that accent and just make her British. Somehow, I seem very much like a lady...I'm really crass and really violent, but I'm drinking tea."

Paramount has yet to release any photos of Jolie in full Croft attire, but we can tell you her look will be slightly different from the game. Gone is the shiny blue T-shirt. Instead, Oscar-winning costume designer Lindy Hemming has crafted a darker, more modern look for Lara. "Her silhouette is almost exactly the silhouette that everybody's expecting," Hemming says. "She wears a really tight black T-shirt, really tight black trousers, her gun belt has a skull-and-crossbones belt buckle, and she has a shiny...modern backpack with a plastic molded look, not like the pack from the game." Aside from the off-kilter color scheme, Jolie's costume looks dead-on—especially when we saw her whip her pistols from her hip holsters. And, as in the game's, Lara's tomb-raiding uniform ain't the duds you'll see Jolie slip in and out of. "Now she's got 13 different costumes," Hemming says, "but some of them are as little as a towel."

So that's why those thugs were storming Croft Manor. 🐾

4X The Memory

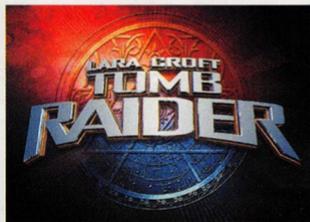
Sega will release its 4x Memory Card a week before the release of Phantasy Star Online in Japan on 12/14, for a retail price of 4800 yen (about \$45).



It's got a total of 800 blocks of memory (four times that of the standard VMU) divided up into four banks of 200 blocks apiece. It's missing the LCD screen and buttons of the original, so the ability to transfer files direct from VMU to VMU is gone, and unfortunately some games are incompatible with it or only allow you to use one of the banks.

Of Sega's first-party games, only *Dynamite Deka 2* (*Dynamite Cop 2*) won't allow you to save at all. *Shenmue*, *Sega Rally* and *Zombie Revenge* won't allow you to switch memory banks. A handful of third-party games suffer from the same afflictions.

Speaking of *Phantasy Star Online*, a limited edition of the game will include a demo of *Sonic Adventure 2*. So if you were thinking of preordering the import version, that little nugget might make it worth it. And if you're hoping to play some *SegaNet* games using a broadband connection in the U.S., you'll have to wait. The broadband adapter won't be out here until Jan. 2, 2000.



RandNet Suspends 64DD Sales

As promising as it may have sounded when the 64DD was first released, Nintendo's RandNet "temporarily" stopped sales of the unit on Oct. 31. Whether or not this move will be permanent and mark the end of the drive's sales has yet to be determined. Existing users will still be able to access the system, which plays games like *Doshin the Giant*, *SimCity 64* and the ultra-cool add-on *F-Zero X Expansion Pack*. This could mean we'll never see the DD version of *Zelda*, which had reportedly been completed some time ago. The 64DD was nowhere to be found at Nintendo's Space World expo just a few months ago.

Nintendo has also pushed back the release of its Mobile GB Adapter by one month—from Dec. 14 to Jan. 27. Also affected by the delay is the release of *Pokémon Crystal*, which will be released on the same day.



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in milk helps.
After that,
it helps keep
them strong.



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EGM'S CURRENT TOP 5 SOUNDTRACKS

5. Kefka's Domain: Final Fantasy VI Original Soundtrack
4. PaRappa the Rapper Original Soundtrack
3. Chrono Cross Original Soundtrack
2. Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time Original Soundtrack
1. Final Fantasy IX Original Soundtrack

An Introduction to Game Soundtracks

Game soundtracks are still a rarity in the U.S., with only a few of the most high-profile games receiving soundtrack support here—and then, usually only as a promotional extra for preordering the game. Recently, publishers like Mars Colony Music and Tokyopop Soundtrax have brought out U.S. versions of soundtracks to be sold in stores everywhere. Whereas in Japan, everything from Game Boy Color bleeps to Squaresoft's epic Final Fantasy scores get the soundtrack treatment, populating Japanese music stores as if they were Top 20 albums. But many gamers have already discovered the sonic goldmine of buying import soundtracks. If you know your way around, you can too.

While most soundtracks simply replicate the music from the original games, others come in a variety of flavors. You've got to know the differences in order to determine what it is you're getting.

An **Original Soundtrack (or "OST")** often represents the music (background music, or BGM) exactly how it appears in the game, without new sound effects getting in the way.

Music that isn't directly from the game but is based on it is sometimes known as the **"Arranged" version**. For example, *Final Fantasy: Dear My Friends* features music from FFV, but improved with new instruments, added effects and extra tracks.

If the game has a strong enough following and the music lends itself well to orchestration, a company will authorize a **"Symphonic" version, sometimes referred to as "Orchestral."** This basically means the original game music is played and recorded by a full orchestra using live musicians. Hyrule Symphony is the name of such an album created using the music for *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time*. Soundtracks for Resident Evil, many of the Final Fantasy series, Chrono Trigger and Shenmue have gotten similar treatments.

As if that wasn't enough to keep track of, if DJs get hold of it, as was the case with Warp's *D2* soundtrack, there may be a **"Remix" soundtrack** containing dance mixes of the music that sound almost nothing like the original tracks (but are still darn cool).

Happy soundtrack hunting, and here's hoping more of 'em come to the U.S. 🎮

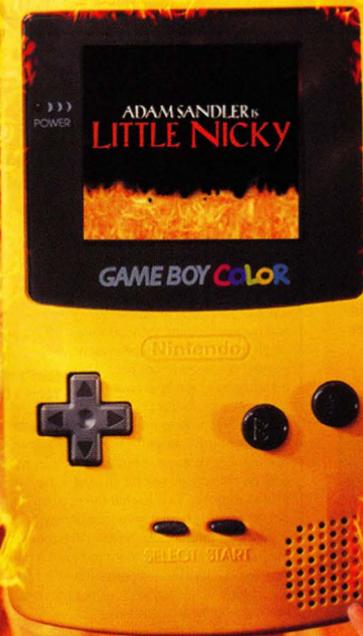


Where to Get Your Soundtrack Fix:

You don't have to fly to Japan to get your hands on phat game soundtracks. Just hop on the Net and check out these sources:

Game Music Online (<http://www.gamemusic.com>) offers a wide variety of old and new soundtracks, often with track listings and customer reviews for the most popular discs.
CD Japan (<http://www.cdjapan.co.jp/>) is a mail-order company located in Japan. When you order from them, you're charged the yen price (converted to dollars, of course), plus shipping. They have a good selection of more recent releases for decent prices.
Tokyopop Soundtrax (<http://music.tokyopop.com>) offers U.S. versions of soundtracks like Final Fantasy IX, Tekken Tag Direct Audio and Parasite Eve.
Mars Colony Music (<http://www.marscolonymusic.com>) also has U.S. versions of game soundtracks. Its titles include *Dino Crisis*, *Power Stone*, *Streets of Rage 2* and the *Resident Evil Orchestra Album*.

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Adam Sandler is Little Nicky and now he's coming to the Game Boy® Color. Battle his evil brothers, possess people and fight demons in this quest to save the world. It's one Hell of an adventure.





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"It's absolutely ridiculous to suggest that by limiting our audience we would successfully be pursuing our business goals."

— Sony CEA VP of Marketing Andrew House, talking to Time Magazine about the PS2 shortage

Old School

Warhawk

(PlayStation)
Released: 1995

Why it was cool:

When we were wondering how 3D graphics would change the way we played games, Warhawk showed us a genre that we'd never seen before on a console. This fast-paced flight game looked complicated, but was actually quite simple for anyone to jump in and quickly be wowed by the detailed visuals. Once you saw the colorful "swarm" missiles pop from your plane's wings and converge onto a target you couldn't help but be impressed (and excited) by the hardware, and the ensuing firefights were absolutely amazing at the time.

How EGM rated it: 9.0, 9.0, 9.5, 9.0

Comments: Not only was this considered one of the PlayStation's early "must-have" games, it was also notorious for its full-motion-video cut-scenes. These badly acted atrocities were definitely a precursor to the B and C movie crap we would see on our games for years to come.

- Kraig Kujawa



WipeOut

(PlayStation)
Released: 1995

Why it was cool:

As a part of Psygnosis' incredible initial lineup (that also included Destruction Derby), WipeOut reminded race fans why they'd bought Sony's machine over Sega's Saturn by offering up smooth, fully 3D tracks at a blistering speed and framerate. Combat racing hadn't been done this well since Mario Kart hit the SNES, and definitely never looked this sleek.

How EGM rated it: N/A—oddly enough, EGM never reviewed the original WipeOut!

Comments: This game stands the test of time much better than other early PS titles. It still looks relatively good (thanks in no small part to Designers' Republic), and plays well even by today's standards. Someone once said to me this is the best game ever made...I don't really agree. WipeOut XL, for one, was better, especially since you could rub walls without coming to a complete stop. Thank god that's a play mechanic that's gone the way of the dodo. Still, WipeOut helped define a genre and spawned loads of clones—a sure sign of an innovative, quality game. -Greg Stewart



THE VIEW FROM JAPAN

The Trouble With Online Gaming

Virtually every video game genre is well-represented in Japan—from action to dating sims. But there's one genre that's missing from the Japanese market—online gaming. Some people here enjoy their Ultima Online, Diablo or Unreal Tournament, but they're not as popular as most console games.

PC games have never been popular in Japan. The user base for consoles has dominated for over 10 years, and developers naturally choose to make games for console systems over PCs. Japanese gamers haven't been very interested in the PC, even after it became more affordable. A PC game that sells more than 100,000 copies is considered a huge hit here, whereas that's a small number on a console. Several companies have tried to break into online gaming on PC. Sega affiliate Nextech, responsible for Resident Evil Code: Veronica, offered up its own online RPG called Dark Eyes. But the response from gamers was far from enthusiastic. Japan System Supply offered their own RPG called Life Storm and Stone Age—which got positive reactions from gamers. Still, the company went bankrupt last October.

Why is it so hard for online games to succeed in Japan? To make a good online game, it takes much more work than stand-alone games. You need to not only make a good game, you also have to maintain a server for people to play on. You have to monitor lag and cheaters, too. Those things are probably much harder for Japanese companies to handle than making a good game, because most companies have been working only on console games for so long—they aren't experienced with a PC environment. And even if they can pull off a good online game, no one is for sure that gamers will play it. There are no flat rate charges for phone calls in Japan like there is in the U.S., which means you have to pay more to play a game via modem, and the number of cable modem subscribers is negligible. Some companies are making online games for Dreamcast, but they also tangle with these problems to some extent.

So, are all the Japanese game giants just sitting on their hands doing nothing? Of course not. Sony is working to expand cable modem service to provide PS2 games (and EverQuest). Square will release Final Fantasy XI, its first online RPG, sometime in the next couple years. Regardless of which system(s) they release it on, it's a safe bet that will be a huge hit. And thanks to DC's built-in modem, Sega can push the envelope hard to revitalize their console with Phantasy Star Online. According to Sonic Team's Yuji Naka, they are planning to sell more than a half million copies of the game in Japan. If they manage to do that, it would be a huge break for online gaming here. On the other hand, Nintendo has a slightly different strategy. They will release Pokémon Crystal in January for GBC to play via cell phone. Not exactly online gaming, but it could entice people to connect.

Japanese companies know online gaming is the future, now it's just a matter of figuring out how to get there. -Yutaka Ohbuchi



EGM's main man in Japan, Yutaka Ohbuchi.

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The soul of a human...
The heart of a hero.



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Eliminate evil using guns, knives, grenades, fists, feet... and of course, swords.



Gothic 3-D locations

Backdrops for battle include Chinatown, sewers and the Gothic City Museum.



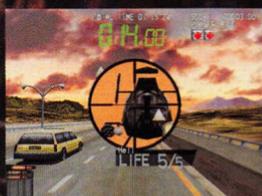
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PlayStation 2



Dreamcast







PRESS
START

DEVELOPER PROFILE

Heavy Iron Studios

Developer Profile: Heavy Iron Studios
Location: Culver City, CA
Website: www.heavy-iron.com

HEAVYIRON
STUDIOS A DIVISION OF THE

of people: 34

Titles team members have worked on previously: Parasite Eve, Fear Effect, Crash Bandicoot and a slew of other titles.

Most exciting aspect of the next-generation consoles: For the programmers, it's all about the new hardware and the possibilities they represent. For the artists, it's about working with a new, less constraining set of rules and maximizing the potential of higher poly counts, higher resolutions and more detailed environments. And for the designers, it's the challenge of making these new possibilities into a compelling game experience.

Hardest thing about turning Evil Dead into a video game: First, many people were looking at this as the unofficial sequel to *Army of Darkness*, so we knew the story had to live up to their expectations. Second, we had to find our own approach to the survival horror genre.

Easiest thing about turning Evil Dead into a video game: The level design turned out to be pretty easy. Coming up with new areas for Ash to explore was a natural extension of our love for the series.

Times you must've watched the Evil Dead movies researching this game: Never... just kidding. We watched the movies about a billion times. Also, we were lucky enough to get production stills from the original movie and even one of the original Necromonicons from *Army of Darkness*.

During late-night programming sessions, we: Let's see...once somebody brought in a Yard Gnome and bunch of modeling clay. Put these two things together with a bunch of geeks at five in the morning and you end up with...well, you can figure it out. At the time we thought it was hilarious; it really wasn't. **Favorite Evil Dead movie and why:** Evil Dead 2—it had just the right balance between horror and camp.

Story behind our name: Heavy Iron is a reference to an old '50s term. Back in the day, they used to call huge mainframes

RENAMED FOR JAPAN

Angel Studios' PS2 game *Smuggler's Run* is getting a new name for its release in Japan. From here on out it shall be called "Crazy Bump" in the Land of the Rising Sun. Visions of Bump n' Jump pop in our head hearing that one.

Sega Games To Appear On Other Systems?

When it comes to making a successful hardware platform, it's been hit or miss with Sega in the past. It's always been a hit with the hardcore audience, but they haven't ever been able to get the attention of the mass audience in Japan, despite a library of great games. That may have fueled the company's recent decision to try to increase its percentage of the software market by offering game titles for other systems, including—as some reports from Japan state—console systems by its rivals (emphasizing that it would also continue to support Dreamcast). Plus, Sega will license out the DC technology to other platforms like cell phones, PCs and other audio-visual equipment. Their goal: to increase their market share

from the current 4.2% to 25%; Nintendo enjoys a 19.6% share.

It's hard to believe that drastic a jump in its percentage of the software market could happen without a move to support consoles, like PS2, Gamecube or Xbox.

Sega of America dismissed that assertion by stating that the Japan announcement would only cover devices such as cell phones and set-top boxes, and would not include competing consoles.

Already, one Sega title—*Sakura Taisen*—has made the jump to Game Boy Color. Not exactly a platform that's going to give Dreamcast much competition—but it is a step in the direction of multi-platform publishing. And Sega recently acquired FamilyWonder Inc., a U.S. dot com that specializes in providing family-based Web entertainment, to increase its Net presence.

"We aim to win the top share of the world market in the near future by increasing the number of platforms which can operate Sega software," newly appointed Strategic Counsel Tetsu Kayama told a news conference. "Our focus on content provision is back in place. Sega aims to become a real game creator."



Sega Game Already on PS2!

If you count this one, Sega's already got a game on PlayStation 2. In 1991, Sega brought out an arcade game called *Time Traveler*. Those who played it remember its obtrusively large cabinet which held a laserdisc player and something to project the holographic image onto the playfield. You starred as cowboy Marshall Gram, a hero able to travel through time to save Princess Kyi-La from the clutches of evil. Gameplay wasn't much more advanced than pushing the right buttons at the right time—but it did have the "Time Reversal Cube," an item which allowed you



to save yourself from death if you made a wrong move. Digital Leisure, producers of the fine *Dragon's Lair*, *Dragon's Lair II: Time Warp* and *Space Ace* DVDs, have brought this arcade experience home on DVD. And of course it'll play on your PS2, too. It's available now at DVD and game stores everywhere.



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Q - Mann

Quartermann - Game Gossip & Speculation

Yo kiddies, it's that time again...when your favorite neighborhood rumor-slinger emerges from his Cave of Wonders™ to deliver the latest n' greatest rumors this side of the Pacific...and maybe the other side too, I dunno. So let's jump right into it...

...Square on Xbox?! Looks like Square might have more in mind for **Final Fantasy XI** than we all first knew. In addition to XI coming to both PS2 and PC (in 2002), an **Xbox version** of the game is reportedly **in the works**. While Square HQ has been rapid-firing their "no comment" responses to all in the press who ask about it, the Q has learned that there are indeed Xbox dev kits at Square. And Microsoft is apparently making it **very tempting** for them to join Mr. Gates' cause. Since a PC version is coming, how much extra work would it take to convert the game? ***WHOOSH*** There goes the sound of Square being exclusively PS2. Didja hear it?

...Remember **Dragon's Lair?** Wasn't that a cool "game"? Well, OK...maybe it was more a cool-looking cartoon than packed with gameplay, but it was good for the early '80s, darnit! **Don Bluth**, the guy behind it, is rumored to be in preproduction on a **full-length Dragon's Lair movie** based on the game and its sequel to be released in theaters in 2002. Those of us who remember the game fondly will certainly be at the theater opening day for that one...

...Speaking of movies, The Q and others will be there for opening day. **The Lord of the Rings trilogy is going to be made into a video game** if everything goes smoothly. Supposedly the bidding on the right to make said game has been fierce, with names like Activision, THQ and Codemasters reportedly entering the fray. But ultimately it looks like **Electronic Arts will be doing the honors**. That gives them Harry Potter, Bond and Tolkien. What's up with EA getting all the movie-licensed games these days, anyway? Not that The Q is complainin' one bit—the **N64 version of TWINE was phat**, baby. As long as the games are good, they can keep churning them out...

...A new company called **Conspiracy Games** is entering the world of bringing Japanese games to the U.S. Its first title will be the **Dreamcast RPG Record of Lodoss War**, based on the mega-popular anime series...Looks like **Game Arts wasn't quite satisfied** with the Japanese sales of its DC RPG **Grandia II**. So you know what that means, don't you? That's right—it's

headed to Sony country. **Grandia II on PlayStation 2** will feature all-new eye candy using the system's power, enough to make RPG fanboys go sterile once again (and buy it again, of course). **Sproing!** The Q still has a place in his heart for the DC version, though...and hey, the DC version'll be out in the U.S. way before a PS2 version sees the light in Japan. **Sauce!**

...While yours truly isn't one for the first-person shooters (though I did get to blast that darn **Mark EGM** guy through the roof a couplea times in DC Quake III before he and friend **Faust** handed me my **entrails on a platter**), this lil' nugget is too interesting to ignore. American McGee (yes, a real guy whose name alone conjures up images of **mulleys 'n' pickup trucks**) and his game **Alice** will show up next year for **either PS2 or Xbox**. It's based on **Alice in Wonderland** and uses the Quake III engine...hmm...looks like we aren't in Kansas anymore, Toto...wait, wrong story...

...Development of **Ninja Gaiden PS2** is still moving forward in Tecmo Japan's offices (like The Q told you a few months ago—it's lookin' good). But **Team Ninja** is not resting on its laurels. Apparently **Dead or Alive 3** is already in the **early stages of development**, with a few members of Team Ninja already beginning pre-production work on the game...

...**Gamecube status report #0005—hardware done, games going full steam ahead.** The new Mario/Luigi game is going to be freaking excellent. **The Big N plans to have a smorgasbord (I love that word) of titles** available for both the Japanese and U.S. launches later this year. And if current reports are right, the system will be **priced very competitively with both Xbox and PS2**. It brings a tear to the eye of this crotchety old newshound to see Nintendo actually gearing up for a big hardware splash. Next year is going to be such a good time for games, it makes me shiver just thinkin' about it...

Welp, that's all the time we have this month. See ya after Election Day!



- The Q



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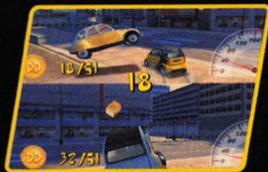
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**"It's really, really irresponsible.
I expect better from Sega."**

— San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown comments on a Sega event for Jet Grind Radio called "Graffiti Is Art"—with artists creating huge designs on canvas (not city property).



IMPORT CALENDAR

Phantasy Star Online



Import Pick of the Month: Sonic Team's epic online RPG, Phantasy Star Online.

PlayStation

- 11/30 DDR Disney's Rave, Konami (Music)
- 11/30 Tales of Eternia, Namco (RPG)
- 12/21 Gunbalina, Namco (Shooting)
- Dec. Puyo Puyo Box, Compile (Puzzle)

PlayStation 2

- 11/30 UNISON, Tecmo (Music)
- 12/21 Top Gear Daredevil, Kemco (Racing)
- 12/21 7 (Seven), Namco (RPG)
- Dec. Cool Boarders Alien, Uep Systems (Sports)
- Dec. Dark Cloud, Sony CEI (RPG)
- Dec. Winback, Kemco (Action)
- 1/25 Onimusha, Capcom (Action)

Dreamcast

- 11/23 Sega Tetris, Sega (Puzzle)
- 12/7 Project Justice, Capcom (Fighting)
- 12/12 El Dorado Gate, Vol. 2, Capcom (RPG)
- 12/14 4x Memory Card, Sega
- 12/14 Guilty Gear X, Sammy (Fighting)
- 12/14 Samba de Amigo Ver. 2000, Sega (Music)
- 12/21 Phantasy Star Online, Sega (RPG)
- 12/21 Daytona USA 2001, Sega (Racing)

Nintendo 64

- 11/21 Sin & Punishment, Nintendo (Action)
- 12/7 Mario Party 3, Nintendo (Party)
- 12/14 Pokémon Stadium Gold/Silver/Crystal Version, Nintendo (Action)
- Dec. Echo Delta, Nintendo (Strategy)

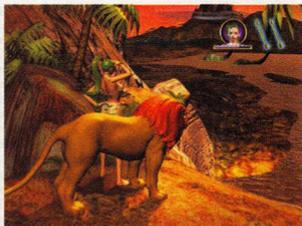
Game Boy

- Dec. Legend of Starfi, Nintendo (Action)
- Jan. Legend of Zelda: Mystical Tree of Fruit, Nintendo (RPG)
- Jan. Pokémon Crystal, Nintendo (RPG)

*Schedule subject to change. Consult your local import game store for the latest release information.

Last-Minute Update: 3DO on PS2

Here's an early look at 3DO's first PS2 games—World Destruction League: Thunder Tanks (below), Portal Runner (bottom right), Warriors of Might & Magic (top right), Army Men Sarge's Heroes 2 (top left).



RockWool

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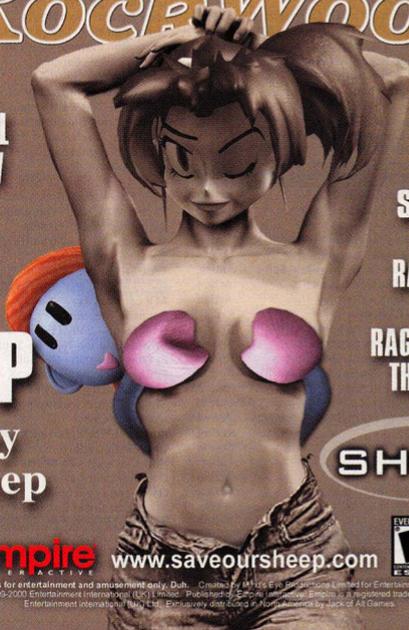
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PRESS
START

Coming Soon - January 2001

December

Game Boy Color	
3D Ultra Pinball - Havas Interactive	Misc. Action
Army Men Arcade Blast - 3DO	Misc. Action
Blues Clues - Mattel	Misc. Action
Carnivale - Vatical Entertainment	Misc. Action
Championship Motocross 2001 - THQ	Sports
Championship Surfer - Mattel	Sports
Dinosaurs - Electronic Arts	Adventure
Emperor's New Groove - Ubi Soft	Misc. Action
Force 21 - Ubi Soft	Misc. Action
Harley Davidson - Infogrames	Misc. Action
Hoyle Card - Havas Interactive	Misc. Action
Jimmy White's Cue Ball - Vatical Ent.	Sports
Kirby Tilt 'n Tumble - Nintendo	Misc. Action
Lion King: Simba's Adventure - Activision	Adventure
Merlin - Electronic Arts	Adventure
MTV Sports: Pure Ride - THQ	Sports
MTV Sports: Ultimate BMX - THQ	Sports
Mummy, The - Konami	Misc. Action
Pokémon Puzzle Challenge - Nintendo	Puzzle
Powerpuff Girls Pant - Bam Entertainment	Misc. Action
Racin' Ratz - Mattel	Misc. Action
Road Champs BXS Stunt Biking - Activision	Sports
RoboGen - Atlas	Sports
Twenty's High-Flying Adventure - Natsume	Adventure
VR Sports: Powerboat Racing - Vatical Ent.	Racing
Warriors of Might & Magic - 3DO	Racing
Woody Woodpecker Racing - Konami	Racing
WWF No Mercy - THQ	Sports
PlayStation	
Big Ol Bass 2 - Konami	Sports
Burs Trick Wake Boarding - Crave Entertainment	Sports
Gold & Glory: Road to El Dorado - Ubi Soft	Adv. Action
Kasparov Chess - Interplay	Sports
Lion King: Simba's Mighty Adv. - Activision	Adventure
Martian Gothic - Take 2 Interactive	Action
Rayman 2 Back to School - Ubi Soft	Misc. Action
Reel Fishing Contractor Combo Pack - Crave	Sports
Sabrina Teenage Witch - Berkeley Systems	Misc. Action
Sea Doo Hydro Cross - Vatical Entertainment	Sports
Supercross 2001 - EA Sports	Sports
Tom Clancy's Rogue Spear - Redstorm	Action
PlayStation 2	
Army Men Air Attack 2 - 3DO	Action
Army Men Sarge's Heroes 2 - 3DO	Action
Dinosaur - Ubi Soft	Action
Donald Duck: Goin' Quackers - Ubi Soft	Action
ESPN NFL Prime Time - Konami	Sports
Jungle Book Rhythm n' Groove - Ubi Soft	Misc. Action
Kengo: Master of Bushido - Crave	Action
MDK 2 Armageddon - Interplay	Action
NASCAR 2001 - EA Sports	Racing
NBA ShootOut 2001 - 989 Sports	Sports
NCAA Final Four 2001 - 989 Sports	Sports
NCAA Game Breaker 2001 - 989 Sports	Sports
NHL FaceOff 2001 - 989 Sports	Sports
Offroad Outlaws - Interplay	Racing
Rayman 2: Revolution - Ubi Soft	Adventure
Star Wars Episode I Starfighter - LucasArts	Action
Stunt GP - Titus	Racing
Surfing H3O - Rockstar	Sports
Theme Park World - EA	Misc. Action
Top Gun - Titus	Action
Wild Wild Racing - Interplay	Racing
Warriors of Might and Magic - 3DO	Action
WDL: Thunder Tanks - 3DO	Action
Nintendo 64	
Blues Brothers 2000 - Titus	Action
Carnivale - Vatical Entertainment	Misc. Action
Donald Duck: Goin' Quackers - Ubi Soft	Action
Hercules - Titus	Action

Ms. Pac-Man Maze Madness - Namco	Puzzle
Polaris Snowcross 2001 - Vatical Entertainment	Sports
Star Wars: Battle for Naboo - LucasArts	Action
Super Bowling - Tommo	Sports
Dreamcast	
Age of Empires II - Konami	Strategy
Armada II - Metro3D	Action/Strategy
Bang!-o - Crave Entertainment	Shooter
Bang! Gunship Elite - Redstorm	Action
Dino Crisis - Capcom	Adventure
Donald Duck: Goin' Quackers - Ubi Soft	Action
Evil Dead: Hail to the King - THQ	Adventure
Grandia II - Ubi Soft	RPG
Heroes of Might & Magic 3 - Ubi Soft	Adv/Strategy
Max Steel - Mattel	Action
Peace Makers - Ubi Soft	Action
Prince of Persia - Mattel	Adventure
Record of Lodoss War - Crave Entertainment	Simulation
Resident Evil 2 - Capcom	Adventure
Resident Evil 3: Nemesis - Capcom	Adventure
Surf Rocket Racer - Crave Entertainment	Racing
Worms World Party - Titus	Misc.

January

Game Boy Color	
Antz Racing - Electronic Arts	Racing
Batman Racing - Ubi Soft	Racing
Croc 2 - THQ	Action
Dragon's Lair - Capcom	Action
Frisbee Golf - Vatical Entertainment	Sports
Legend of the River King 2 - Natsume	Sports
Lego Racers - Lego Media	Racing
Lego Stunt Rally - Lego Media	Racing
Mega Man Extreme - Capcom	Action
Metal Walker - Capcom	RPG
Mission Bravo - Mattel	Misc. Action
Pocket Racers - Interplay	Racing
Powerpuff Girls Battle Him - Bam Ent.	Misc. Action
Return of the Ninja - Natsume	Action
Simpsons: Treehouse of Horror, The - THQ	Sports
Tech Deck Skateboarding - Codemasters	Action
Xena - Titus	Action
PlayStation	
Army Men Arcade Blasts - 3DO	Action
Backyard Football - Infogrames	Sports
Digimon World 2 - Bandai	RPG
MTV Sports: TJ Lavin's Ultimate BMX - THQ	Sports
Scoby-Doo! - THQ	Misc. Action
Time Crisis: Project Titan - Namco	Action
PlayStation 2	
ATV Off-Road Fury - Sony	Racing
Bouncer, The - Square CEA	Fighting
Dark Cloud - Sony CEA	RPG
Driving Emotion Type-S - Square EA	RPG
F1 Championship - Ubi Soft	Racing
F1 Championship Season 2K - EA Sports	Racing
Gran Turismo 3 - Sony CEA	Sports
Ground Control - Berkeley Systems	Action
Ico - Sony CEA	Puzzle
Knockout Kings 2001 - EA Sports	Sports
Navy Seals - Jaleco	Action
NBA Live 2001 - EA Sports	Sports
Oni - Rockstar Games	Action
Onimusha - Capcom	Adventure
Star Wars: Super Bombad Racing - LucasArts	Racing
Nintendo 64	
Andy Chronicles - THQ	RPG
Dinosaur Planet - Nintendo	Adventure
Mega Man 64 - Capcom	Adventure
Sea Doo Hydro Cross - Vatical Entertainment	Racing
VR Powerboat - Vatical Entertainment	Racing

Dreamcast

Deer Avenger - Berkeley Systems	Misc
Gun Bird 2 - Capcom	Shooter
Microsoft Links LS - Konami	Sport
M5 Combat Flight Simulator - Konami	Simulation
Mummy, The - Konami	Action
Phantasy Star Online - Sega	RPG
Playmobil Hype - Ubi Soft	Misc
Polaris Snowcross - Vatical Entertainment	Sports
Project Justice - Capcom	Fighting
Sierra Sports Game Room - Sierra	Sport
Stunt GP - Infogrames	Racing
Stupid Invaders - Ubi Soft	Action
SWAT 3D - Sierra	Strategy
System Shock 2 - Vatical Entertainment	Action

February

Game Boy Color	
Alien Man - THQ	Action
Actions: Thanatos Encounter - THQ	Action
ESPN National Hockey Night - Konami	Sport
Hercules - Titus	Action
Indiana Jones - THQ	Action
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX - Activision	Sports
Ronaldo V.Soccer - Infogrames	Sport
PlayStation	
Return Racing - Ubi Soft	Racing
Deuce - Midway	Adventure
Disney's Aladdin - Sony CEA	Misc
Inspector Gadget - Ubi Soft	Misc
PlayStation 2	
Ephemeral Fantasia - Konami	RPG
Project Eden - Eidos	Adventure
Seven Blades - Konami	Adventure
Zone of the Enders - Konami	Adventure
Nintendo 64	
Eternal Darkness - Nintendo	RPG
Paper Mario - Nintendo	Action/Action
Dreamcast	
Wheelie: American Pro Trucker - Sega	Racing
Cannon Spike - Capcom	Shooter
Evil Twin - Ubi Soft	Adventure
F1 Championship - Ubi Soft	Racing
Legend of the Blademasters - Ripcord	Adventure
Mars Matrix - Capcom	Action
M.O.U.T. 2025 - Ripcord	Racing
OutRigger - Sega	Action

March

Game Boy Color	
VIP - Ubi Soft	Action
Sponge Bob - THQ	Adventure
Rocket Power - THQ	Adventure
Matchbox Emergency Patrol - Mattel	Racing
PlayStation	
Alone in the Dark 4 - Infogrames	Adventure
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX - Activision	Sport
VIP - Ubi Soft	Action
PlayStation 2	
Giants - Interplay	Adventure
Off Road Thunder - Midway	Racing
Shadow of Destiny - Konami	RPG
Nintendo 64	
Conker's Bad Fur Day - Nintendo	Action
Dreamcast	
Atom in the Dark 4 - Infogrames	Adventure
VIP - Ubi Soft	Action

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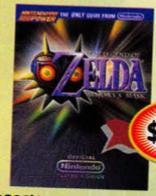
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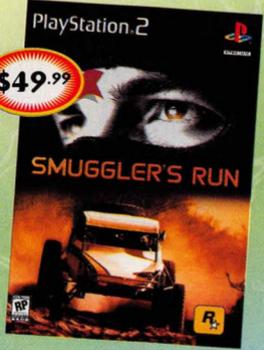
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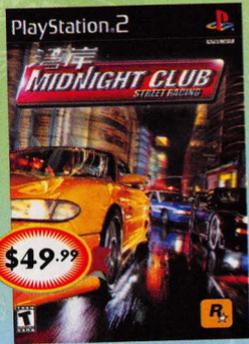
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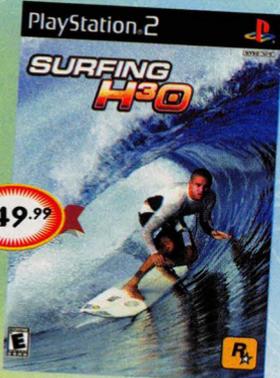
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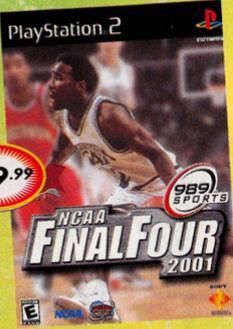
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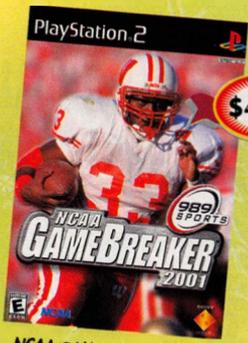
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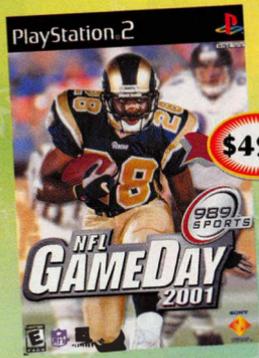
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PRESS
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The Top 20 Best-Selling Games of September, 2000

1 - Madden NFL 2001



EA's Madden spends a second month at the top. But wait, did you notice that Pokémon is a no-show in the top 10 this month? The string is broken! Enjoy it now, the little critters are likely to be back in force next month.

	LAST MONTH	1
9.5	9.0	
Kraig	Dean	
9.5		
Joe		

2 - NFL 2K1



What do you know? A **Sega Sports** title cracks the top five twice in three months. It's a good month for football games, and NFL 2K1 is one of the best. Go get your SegaNet account and take on Team EGM!

	LAST MONTH	NEW
10	9.5	
Dan	Dean	
9.5		
Kraig		

3 - Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2



Did we call it or what? The first month out the sequel to one of **Activision's** hottest games ever debuts at number three! Chances are this baby'll be a mainstay in the top five for a long time to come. Surprisingly, the prequel...

	LAST MONTH	NEW
10	10	
Crispin	Dean	
10		
Greg		

4 - Tony Hawk's Pro Skater



...is right behind it, much like the Hawkman's double feature a month ago. Too bad **Activision's** N64 version didn't complete the triple crown this month. Tony's showing Pokémon-type dominance in the charts.

	LAST MONTH	4
9.0	9.0	
Che	Crispin	
8.0	7.5	
Dean	Chris	

5 - Gran Turismo 2



Looks like becoming a Greatest Hits title is all it took for **Sony** to sell another few boatloads of the greatest driving simulator to date. That makes two winners of EGM's coveted Platinum award in the top five. You like us, you really like us!

	LAST MONTH	15
10	10	
John	Dean	
10	10	
Crispin	Che	

6 Mario Tennis
Nintendo

	LAST MONTH	NEW
--	------------	-----

7 Spider-Man
Activision

	LAST MONTH	NEW
--	------------	-----

8 Star Wars Episode I Racer
Nintendo

	LAST MONTH	3
--	------------	---

9 Spec Ops
Take 2 Interactive

	LAST MONTH	7
--	------------	---

10 NFL GameDay 2001
989 Studios

	LAST MONTH	NEW
--	------------	-----

11 Chrono Cross Square EA		LAST MONTH	2
12 Driver GT Interactive		LAST MONTH	6
13 Pokémon Red Nintendo		LAST MONTH	8
14 Mario Party 2 Nintendo		LAST MONTH	---
15 Pokémon Yellow Nintendo		LAST MONTH	5
16 WWF SmackDown! THQ		LAST MONTH	10
17 Tekken 3 Namco		LAST MONTH	17
18 Crash Team Racing Sony Computer Entertainment		LAST MONTH	---
19 Madden NFL 2001 Electronic Arts		LAST MONTH	NEW
20 Ultimate Fighting Championship Crave Entertainment		LAST MONTH	NEW

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games Service. Call Kristin Barnett-von Korff at (516) 625-2481 for questions regarding this list. Top 5 game descriptions written by the EGM staff.

JAPAN TOP 10

1 MotoGP Namco	
2 Dragon Quest VII Enix	
3 Fushigi na Dungeon: Furai no Shiren 2 Chun Soft	
4 Pop'n Music 4 Append Kosumi	
5 Pachinko Paradise 4 Irem Software Engineering	
6 El Dorado Gate, Volume I Capcom	
7 Pro Baseball at the End of the Century Square	
8 Eternal Arcadia Sega	
9 World Soccer Winning Eleven 2000 Konami	
10 Koro Koro Kirby Nintendo	

Weekly Famitsu, week ending 10/15/2000



Namco's PS2 games have consistently been top-sellers and that trend continues with MotoGP. Jaggies? What jaggies? Who cares about jaggies?



Sega released three different versions of Eternal Arcadia. One, the regular game; another, a premium box set; and finally, an @tari version—which allows gamers to pay for a code to unlock the full version online.

HSU AND CHAN

GAME DESIGNERS ARE...

O, HOLY NUTS

BACK OFF, FLUFFY! I'M WATCHING YOU!

RESPECT THE STAFF!



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BUSINESS ASIDE, THOUGH, THERE'S STILL A LOT OF HOLIDAY ACTIVITY TO BE ENDURED, SUCH AS ENTERTAINING GUESTS! I BELIEVE SOME OF YOU MIGHT NOT YET HAVE MET...



OUR SISTER HIROKO...

THIS HEFTY LIMP ON OUR SOFA WHICH WE ARE TOLD IS OUR BROTHER-IN-LAW, DEKE...

AND OUR BARNY NIECE, HANABU, WHO JUST HAPPENS TO BE CUTE AS A BUTTON!

CLEAN LIVING! TWENTY RAW EGGS A MORNING, AND YOU TOO, CARE LION LIKE ME!

SURE! CAN HELP TO THE VIDEO GAMERS, HANABU!



MAYBE WE HAVE SOME RAWSIDE CHEWS SOMEWHERE...

AAAAAIGH!

BOO-WOO-HOO!



HEH! THAT SOUNDED LIKE SOMEONE CRYING ON THE BACK PORCH!

'D BEST INVESTIGATE!



WHAT WAS THAT?

AN ELDERLY HOODY MOB.

WAIT HERE, I THINK I KNOW HOW TO HANDLE THIS.



THEEETHING BISCUITS NOT WORKING OUT?

QUACK!! QUICKLY, HSU! FEED THE FLUNGLES!

GRR!!

THERE, THERE, LITTLE FELLOW -- IN THE SPIRIT OF THE HOLIDAYS, I OFFER YOU THIS WHOLESOME CAN OF CREAMED CORN!

NO, YOU GO, BE MERRY!

SHIFFLE! THINK YOU KIND SO, BUT I AM NOT IN NEED OF FOOD.



MY NAME IS BLINKY, AND I'M HERE ON A MISSION OF GRAVE IMPORTANCE -- YOU SEE, I AM ONE OF SANTA'S ELVES, AND I CANNOT FIND A SOLUTION TO OUR PROBLEM SOON. CHRISTMAS MAN BE RUINED FOR BOYS AND GIRLS ALL OVER AMERICA!



WELL, YOU WANT THIS CREAMED CORN, ANHWHY? WE'RE NOT GONNA EAT IT.



SO, WHAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH CHRISTMAS THIS YEAR? BAD ECONOMY? ALL THOSE STUPID PLASTIC LIGHT-UP LAWN STATUES FINALLY DROVE SANTA TO THE BREAKING POINT?

NO, NO, IT'S THE PS2 SHORTAGE -- OUR ORDER CAME IN SEVERAL UNITS SHY, AND I CAN'T FIND REPLACEMENTS BY CHRISTMAS EVE, WHO KNOWS WHAT WILL HAPPEN! DISAPPOINTMENT! HEARTBREAK! THE TOTAL ECONOMIC COLLAPSE OF A BUNCH OF LITTLE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES! WE MIGHT EVEN TAKE A PAN CUT!



HEH, SOUNDS BAD, HAVE YOU TRIED PUTTING PS2 CASINGS AROUND REGULAR DVD PLAYERS? MOST OF THE GAMES AVAILABLE FOR IT THIS FAR ARE PRETTY MIDDLCORE AT BEST; IT COULD BE HELD IN UNTIL NEXT YEAR BEFORE ANYONE NOTICES THE SWITCH!

WHY, I'M INSULTED! SANTA'S WORKSHOP WOULD NEVER STOP SO LOW AS TO TRY TO DUPE THE PUBLIC LIKE THAT! BESIDES, THE DVD PLAYERS RATTLE AROUND TOO MUCH INSIDE. NO, WE NEED TO FIND THE REAL MOVIES!



HO HO HO, VIDEO GAMERS! THE SNOW IS FALLING, HOUSES ARE DECORATED, Y'ES, ONCE AGAIN, IT IS THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR!

ASSUMING, OF COURSE, THAT YOU DEFINE "WONDERFUL" AS "DEVOID OF PARKING SPACES!"

I LOVE THE CHRISTMAS SEASON, MAN!

THE BEAUTY OF A SNOW-DUSTED LANDSCAPE! THE SOY OF WATCHING CHILDREN STRUGGLING AGAINST THEIR NATURAL TENDENCIES AS THEY TRY TO BE GOOD FOR A WHOLE MONTH!

GO ON, PASTE ONE UP THE SIDE OF THE HEAD WITH A SUSHBALL! THEY CAN'T FIGHT BACK! IT'S A ROT!



OF COURSE, IT'S NOT ALL FUN AND GAMES! FOR THOSE OF US WORKING IN THE VIDEO GAME INDUSTRY, DECEMBER IS THE MOST IMPORTANT MONTH OF THE YEAR!

IT'S A TIME OF HEATED COMPETITION, AS EACH GAME MANUFACTURER TRIES TO SCREW THE OTHERS OUT OF THE LOVING ATTENTION OF YOUR HO-HO-DOLLARS!

BIG PAYOUTS FOR SOME, CRUSHING DEFEAT FOR OTHERS!

OH, AND THERE'S ALSO THE OFFICE HOLIDAY PARTIES, THOSE CAN GET PRETTY WEIRD TOO.

SANTA'S WATCHING YOU, KID! GET AWAY FROM MY CAR!

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His Body Exists In The
Mundane World.
His Spirit Resides
On A Higher Plane.



In Between Is Chaos.

In this, the first traditional RPG for N64, a young man embarks on a seemingly impossible journey to discover his identity and fulfill his destiny. Can he stave off his enemies, overcome his obstacles and find that which he has dreamed about? Or will chaos keep Alaron from everything that may be rightfully his?

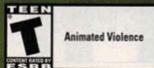
- Real-time 3D environments and beautifully-animated characters.
- Unique blend of party-based adventuring and turn-based combat.
- Storyline written by Chris Klug, creator of the pen-and-paper game DragonQuest.
- Up to 13 characters to add to Alaron's party.



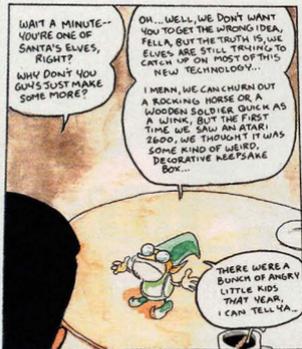
The King and all his knights are searching the castle for you.



...and a perhaps
if anyone can
reach whatever
plane you walk,
then listen...
I have dreams to tell,
we will not meet before
our time...
...where the river
receives the stones...
I am what was not
there when these two met,
decided your path and
and... and a saw you...
here and not here as you
and... and...
stay who you are and
you will see this too...
...starchis...
...shape
of what lies up ahead
for both of us...
stay who you are...
...right well...
I walk beside you...



www.thq.com



CHARTER FIS
PH: 555-26

*Relax.
He'll find other work.*



COME ONE, COME ALL.

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE YOU WERE INVOLVED IN A FREE-FOR-ALL OF THIS MAGNITUDE. **QUAKE III ARENA** ON SEGA DREAMCAST IS A PRIMAL STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL WHERE THE FIT BECOME CHAMPIONS AND THE UNFIT BECOME STRAINS. PRACTICING ALONE CAN ONLY TAKE YOU SO FAR. IF YOU'RE READY TO TRY YOUR CHARM ON OTHERS, TRY A CASUAL ONE-NIGHTER IN THE ARENA. YOU NEVER KNEW IT COULD BE LIKE THIS.

IDENTIFICATION
2230X

BECOME ONE OF OVER 30
SAVAGE GLADIATORS FROM
ALL OVER THE UNIVERSE TO
MEET IN THE ARENA.



Q3A
DREAMCAST



CHARACTERS 32
BYTES 1024
DESCRIPTIONS 100
FOR MULTIPLAYER ACTIVITY.
RECEIPT NO SUBSTITUTES.

MODEL 788842

IDENTIFICATION
X00B

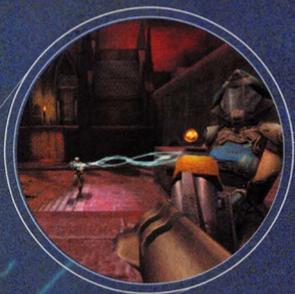




RESPECIFICATION
2003X

A FULL ARSENAL OF WEAPONRY
HAS BEEN ASSEMBLED FOR
EVERY ANGLE OF WARFARE.

ROCKET LAUNCHER: DIRECT HIT DEVASTATING
[ALSO SEE SPLASH DAMAGE]



RESPECIFICATION
2500X

THE NEXT STATE OF MULTI-
PLAYER GAMING EXPERIENCE
IS HERE. ENTER THE ARENA
ONLINE AND COMPETE WITH
PC AND OTHER DREAMCAST
OPPONENTS.



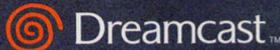
MULTIPLAYER



RESPECIFICATION
3000X

GET TO KNOW YOUR
SURROUNDINGS. OVER 30
FULLY REALIZED 3D
ENVIRONMENTS, AS STUNNING
AS THEY ARE DEADLY.

QUAKE III ARENA



RASTER
PRODUCTIONS



Animated Blood and Gore
Animated Violence

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15h



15h



4



 Dreamcast™

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Stopping is a bad idea.

In a world of angry cops, rival taggers and lots of paint, it's important to keep moving. It's a race against time to leave your mark on the sprawling urban environment. Armed with skates, a radio and varying quiver of spray paints, it's you against the world. But you'd better be quick because the price of self expression just got higher.



Featuring music by Rob Zombie, Jurassic 5 and Mix Master Mike.



Previews

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WARNING:
Previews marked with international symbols may or may not be released in the U.S. They are designed to run on Japanese or European PAL systems. Import at your own risk.

Putting together all previews this month, we all ended up with the same question: Where are all the upcoming N64 games? No doubt many of you who are asking yourselves the same thing. We don't have a single preview for the system this issue, and rather than run yet more Banjo-Toolie shots, we decided to put the space to better use. So why has the number of N64 games on the horizon slowed to a trickle?

The answer, near as we can figure, is that developers are running away in droves. Running away from the expensive and risky cart format, running away from the notoriously difficult (even Nintendo admits it now) N64 development environment, and running toward safer bets like the huge PlayStation market, or starting work on next-generation platforms like Xbox, PS2, and yes, Gamecube.

What all this means is that it doesn't look like the N64 is gonna grow old gracefully like the PS one (which is still enjoying some of its best games ever, even after its successor system has been released). Big N cart releases are already few and far between, with 10



The PS2 certainly doesn't have any shortage of great-looking titles on the horizon—THQ's incredible Red Faction for one. Check it out starting on page 114.

months still left to go before Gamecube makes it to the U.S. There's a handful of great-looking games on the way—Paper Mario, Conker, Dinosaur Planet—but notice anything else those titles have in common? Yup, they've all been delayed. Nintendo has so few games left they seem to be intentionally spacing them out.

Don't worry though, we aren't gonna take this lying down. We love the N64 just like many of you and we'll be back next month, looking high and low for worthwhile new releases or updates. Here's hoping we find some. 🐉

TOP 5 Preview Picks

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Evil Dead: Hail to the King | PlayStation, Winter |
| 2. Red Faction | PlayStation 2, March |
| 3. Lunar 2: Eternal Blue Complete | PlayStation, December |
| 4. Skies of Arcadia | Dreamcast, December |
| 5. Sonic Shuffle | Dreamcast, December |

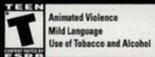
Who Wants To Make An RPG?

OK, we've had a few questions and concerns raised about our RPG Maker contest (announced right here on this page in issue #135), so here's an addendum for all you budding Sakaguchis out there. You still need to buy a copy of Agatec's RPG Maker for the PS one (which is available now) and you still need to complete your masterpiece and send it to us by Dec. 31, 2000. Those of you concerned about time limits, please remember, we're not looking for the next Final Fantasy here. All we want are creative, witty RPGs that can be completed in a relatively short period of time. Finally, we realize not everyone has access to a Dex Drive, so here's the deal. If you have a Dex Drive, e-mail us your game file at egmcontest@ziffdavis.com. However, if you don't have access to a Dex Drive you may mail your memory card to us at the address below. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope and we'll do our best to send the memory card back to you. Please note that we can't guarantee delivery. First Prize consists of a PlayStation 2 and copies of Armored Core 2, Evergrace and Eternal Ring, all courtesy of Agatec.

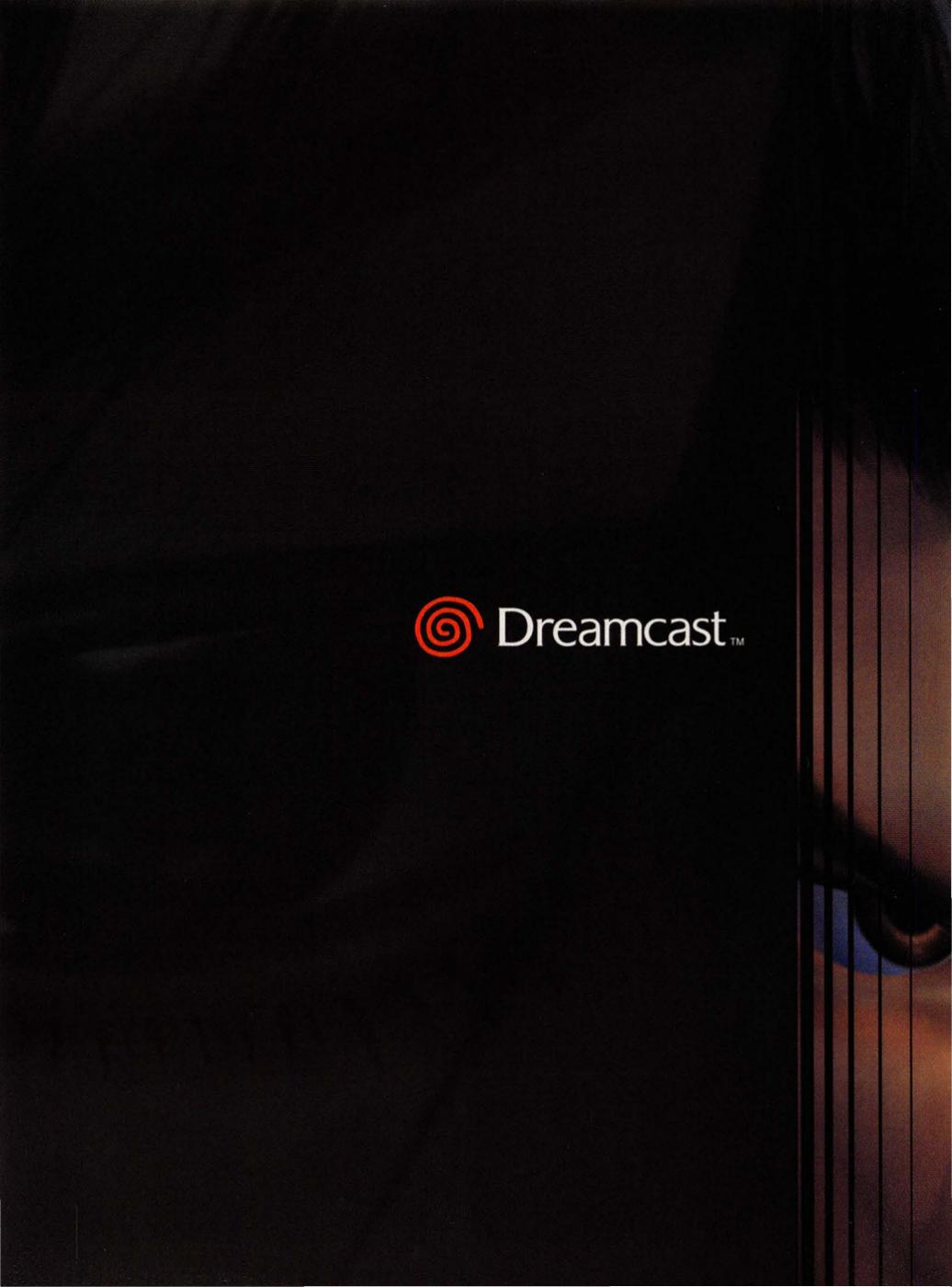
EGM RPG Maker Contest
P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338

TWO WORDS

Shenmue



www.sega.com/shenmue



 Dreamcast™



PREVIEW

Sonic Shuffle

Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sega
Players: 1-4
Genre: Action
% Done: 70%
Release: Winter
Web Address: www.sega.com
The Good: Another Sonic game!
The Bad: Frequent loading
And The Ugly: Tails after Dr. Robotnik clobbers him with a 16-pound weight



Your mission: to secure the magical Precioustones, scattered throughout five distinct worlds. Each world has its own board, each offering hazards and shortcuts tied to the world's theme. All of the play fields provide branching paths. Choose from (left to right) the Emerald Coast, Firebird Zone, Nature Zone, the Riot Train or the Fourth Dimension.

NO ONLINE PLAY

Connection Interrupted

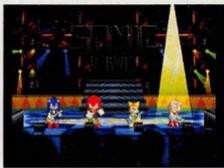
When Sonic Shuffle was originally announced just before E3, it was heralded as one of the first games players would be able to play on Sega's spunky new SegaNet online gaming service. Unfortunately, this option was scrapped, leaving single players with computer opponents as the sole competitive option. According to Sega, the decision was made to ensure the game would ship in time for the holidays. While it already looks like a great party game as is, we can't help but miss what could have made Sonic Shuffle truly special.

With heavy hitters like Quake III and NFL 2K1 sure bring hardcore players into the SegaNet fold, games like Sonic Shuffle could show casual gamers the meaning of online fun. Then again...if the whole family catches onto DC Net gaming, you may have to start waiting for your turn on the controller. Maybe it's not such a bad thing after all...

Console owners have come to expect greatness from any title that has the word "Mario" on it. Nintendo's intrepid little plumber can seem to do no wrong—whether he's battling koopas, racing around a go-kart track or hitting golf balls, a game with his name on it guarantees fun. It also guarantees high volume sales—a truth that has not gone unnoticed by rival developers. The value of cultivating a company mascot has led to the inception of Universal Interactive's Crash Bandicoot and Sega's Sonic the Hedgehog, and where the plumber goes, these two follow. Crash and Sonic started life as heroes in platform adventures, just as Mario had. The success of the Mario Kart series prompted the subsequent release of Crash Team Racing on the PlayStation and Sonic R on the Saturn. And now, the popularity of Mario Party has given rise to the development of Crash Bash and Sonic Shuffle.



Minigames: these don't pop up as often as you'd think, but when they do, they offer a great variety of entertaining challenges.



Of course, Crash Bash did not provide gamers with a board game layout; its play focused exclusively on mini-games. This ultimately led to a multiplayer experience that was less satisfying than the one Mario Party offered. Sonic Shuffle doesn't take such chances: It sticks more faithfully to the structure of Nintendo's game. As you progress toward a specific goal on one of five different game boards, you collect gold rings, which increase your score and buying power: Land on a red platform, and you lose some rings. Land on a blue platform and you gain some. Multiplayer events pop up now and then, testing your hand-eye coordination. All of this has been seen before, has worked before, and works here, too.

As with most first-party Dreamcast titles, the visual presentation is really slick. A new cel-shading technique—used to such great effect in Jet Grind Radio—provides in-game characters with a hand-drawn, cartoony look. The figures are quite striking, and reinforce the game's light, fanciful tone. The five difficult stages look great too—each one presents a dreamscape threatened by the forces of Void, the game's central antagonist. This evil figure has gained control of the mystical "Precioustones"—powerful gems which have the ability to destroy dreams. Sonic, Tails, Knuckles and Amy are enlisted by Illumina, a magical sprite, to regain the Precioustones and restore order to the



PREVIEW

Skies of Arcadia

Publisher:	Sega
Developer:	Overworks
Players:	1
Genre:	RPG
% Done:	100%
Release:	Available Now
Also Try:	Chrono Cross, FFXIII
Web Address:	www.sega.com
The Good:	A deep story line packed with great gameplay
The Bad:	Arcadia is a wonderful game, but why didn't they just make Phantasy Star V?
And The Ugly:	Aika's angry face



Once you charge up your spirit bar you can unleash colorful (and very powerful) special attacks.

While it's true *Skies of Arcadia* doesn't have quite the overall visual impact found in *Grandia II*, it still has more than a few simply amazing-looking locations.



EXPRESSIONS

Face It

One cool feature found in *Arcadia* is a very extensive facial expression system. While there's plenty of written text, the characters themselves don't have more than a handful of spoken words, but the emotions on their faces speak volumes.



Like it or not, it's hard to deny the fact that the Saturn was a crap system for RPGs. With the sole exception of the amazing experience that was *Panzer Dragon Saga*, if you were a fan of traditional role-playing games, the Saturn kind of screwed you over. No *Phantasy Star*. No *Lunar*. No *Grandia* (in America anyway). Yeah, there were plenty of keen strategy RPGs, but you could count the worthwhile traditional RPGs on one finger. Yet here we are on the Dreamcast, one year in, and three major RPGs are almost upon us—and all of them smell of greatness.

But, of course, if you ask any Dreamcast-owning RPG fan which game he or she is looking forward to this holiday season, you'll most likely hear "*Grandia II*" or "*Phantasy Star Online*." There's no doubt about it, *Skies of Arcadia* is certainly the underdog in the small swarm of Japanese RPGs headed to our shores, but the reason for this is puzzling. Let's put it this way: Not only is this Sega's first in-house RPG since the last *Panzer Dragon* game, *Arcadia* is headed up by freaking Reiko Kodama, a woman who's strongly responsible for the *Phantasy Star*

series—arguably one of the greatest collections of RPGs ever. Well, except for the third one. But still...

Why the lack of insane enthusiasm then? It might have something to do with the fact the screenshots for *Arcadia* don't exactly showcase the game favorably against *Grandia II*, and it certainly lacks the heritage and online gameplay *PSO* offers. But then again, Sega was not trying to create a simply pretty game or an online adventure, instead they concentrated on crafting a deep and moving role-playing experience, something we must admit they succeeded in wonderfully (check out our Review section for more details).

With *Arcadia*, Sega returns to the roots of what makes an RPG great—the feelings of discovery and adventure. Developer *Overworks* went as far as creating the world map long before the story or characters were finalized, so they could "discover" each of the new lands as they worked on the storyline. Sure, it might sound a bit silly, but it was done to provide a very believable effect of true exploration.

TEAM ANDROMEDA LIVES ON! WELL, SORT OF.

The Six Degrees of Panzer Dragoon Saga

Yes, *Panzer Dragoon* developer Team Andromeda is gone. They have scattered to the winds that are the many Sega in-house teams, but their legacy lives on in games like *Space Channel 5*, *Jet Grind Radio*, *Shenmue* and *Skies of Arcadia*. And while we'll likely never see a *Panzer Dragoon* *Saga* 2, you'll be happy to hear *Arcadia* will give any PD fan more than a few nifty flashbacks.



Note the camera angle, background visuals and character graphics from *Panzer Saga*.



Wowza! Looks similar, eh? Albeit crisper graphics with a bit more color.



The visuals in *Skies of Arcadia* may not be the best ever on the DC, but they certainly aren't bad—check out the variety of locales you visit.

Skies of Arcadia allows you to travel across vast areas nearly whenever you want, giving the game a very non-linear feel—in stark contrast to *Grandia II*.

The good news is Sega is making sure the gameplay matches the caliber of the plot, infusing the battle system and spell upgrade feature with tons of strategy, and including a bunch of minigames and secret areas in many towns and other areas—giving RPG lovers incentive to explore everywhere they can.

In many ways *Arcadia* is the next *Phantasy Star*, and not just because of who's on the development staff—it's also selling horribly in Japan, a performance similar to Sega's original flagship RPG series. Of course, *Phantasy Star* made waves here, and Sega is certainly hoping *Skies* will follow suit. After playing it, so are we... 

Needless to say, the story line in *Skies of Arcadia* was the main focus in its development, and this tale features an outstanding cast of characters, tons of twists and turns, and just the right amount of humor—plus the translation is being handled by the talented team who localized *Panzer Dragoon Saga*.

The story is based around a world made up of floating islands and a noble sky pirate named Vyse, his childhood friend Aika, and a mysterious woman named Fina who they rescue during the mid-air robbery of a Valuan ship. You're soon off on an adventure that pits you against not only a powerful enemy nation, but also evil pirates, monsters found on newly discovered lands, a giant flying whale with a dark past, and a series of ancient weapons that once nearly tore the world apart. You'll visit a handful of incredibly well-designed towns, fight in tons of puzzle-laden dungeons, and search for hidden artifacts and treasure the world over. And while you will have to do things in a certain order,



MINIGAME

Pint(a) Sized



Sure, looking at those 128-Bit graphics all day can wear out the strongest of us, so thankfully Sega has included a VMU-only minigame titled *Pinta's Quest* into *Skies of Arcadia*. This little adventure, in which you fly *Pinta's* small ship through different obstacles, is actually quite cool, plus you can level up this little dude by completing "quests" (such as dodging rocks) and the keen items you find can be used back in the Dreamcast game.

SHIVER ME TIMBERS, AND LOAD THE CANNONS!

Arrgh, You Sank Me Battleship!

A change of pace from the more traditional RPG battles you'll face in *Skies of Arcadia*, the ship-to-ship confrontations are similar to rock-paper-scissors. Before each round of attacks, you choose which commands each of your characters will perform—like attack, heal or block—and then view the outcome before it all starts over again.



Pick what you'd like each character to do for this round. Each attack uses up spirit power, so keep a close eye on that bar on the top.



Speed Devils ONLINE RACING

Attention, sinners. The most infernal arcade racer ever now runs online. All the hellish tracks, tricked out cars, and shady side bets from the original Speed Devils return – plus 11 new cars, and 21 new ways to put your hard-earned cash, car, and street rep on the line. Hey, leave the "legal" sports for those cornfed boys down the street. SegaNet just got itself a red light district.



www.ubisoft.com



7P-0001-CV-117



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THE HIGHWAY TO HELL NOW ONLINE.





PREVIEW

18 Wheeler American Pro Trucker

Publisher:	Sega of Japan
Developer:	AM2
Players:	1-2
Genre:	Racing
% Done:	100%
Release:	February
Also Try:	Crazy Taxi
Web Address:	www.sega.com
The Good:	Another unique driving game from Sega
The Bad:	Arcade roots give it a short shelf life
And The Ugly:	Kickin' up cow-pies!



Bigger payloads mean extra weight, decreasing your rig's speed and making it harder to finish; but they also mean bigger rewards if you do.

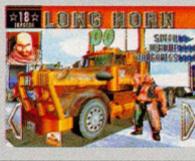


Catching another rig's slipstream is a key element in coming out ahead at the goal-line. Use it well and use it often.

SHOOTIN' GALLERY

Mug Shots

A peek at the participants of 18 Wheeler APT.



Have you ever wondered what it would be like to live life out on the open road, with no one to answer to except Mother Nature? Sure you do, and thanks to Yu Suzuki's famed AM2 crew now you can get your rig on without the need for tricky licenses, expensive vehicles, high insurance premiums, or a crash-course in "10-4" trucker lingo. ("Cousin, you got your ears on? I got a Kojak with a Kodak, come on back!"—translation: "Greetings, friend. I see a police officer with a radar gun. Did you hear what I said?")

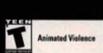
No, now you can have it all for less than 50 bucks, hotshot. Scheduled to come to the States early next spring, complete with head-to-head Internet play, 18 Wheeler American Pro Trucker is Sega's ode to the

trucker's life. Featuring courses that take you from locations like New York to Key West (in the span of less than five minutes), your goal is to deliver cargo to your destination with as little damage as possible. Sounds straightforward, but every course has a rival you must contend with who is trying to beat you to the same destination point, and who will spare no effort in impeding your progress. Luckily there are "bonus cars" littering the highway, which you can ram to add precious seconds on the constantly ticking clock. There are also minigames in between levels that test your parking skills for premium items, such as a horn upgrade or stylin' fuzzy dice to hang from your rear-view mirror.

For added life, 18 Wheeler also features a series of driving challenges a la Crazy Taxi—perform well and you can unlock new drivers and trucks. And if you want to race a friend, there's a split-screen two-player mode. Points are the goal of these contests: While your opponent may come in ahead of you, if you've struck and comboed more bonus cars to get your final point total higher, you win. But what really has the potential to extend this arcade game's shelf life is the aforementioned Internet play. We haven't had a chance to try it yet (it's being added special for the U.S. version—how 'bout that?), but racin' all your buddies from Cleveland to Albuquerque sure sounds appealin'. Here's hoping for a lag-free experience. 🚛



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- *INNOVATIVE COMBAT SYSTEM
- *FAVORITE CHARACTERS FROM THE SHOW
- *FIGHT AGAINST MYTHICAL TERRIFYING MONSTERS
- *12 FULLY 3D WORLDS TO EXPLORE IN ANCIENT GREECE

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PREVIEW
GALLERY



GET YOUR SWORD ON

Modern-day razors *think* they offer a close shave, when in reality, they don't hold a candle to yesterday's skin-care equipment. For the latest in retro-modern cutlery, check out: <http://www.imperialweapons.com/oriental/swords.html> for the boo-ya in chin-scraping technology. You'll be glad you did.

Worms World Party

At long last, **Titus** will bring out a console version of Worms that has online play this **winter!** Multiplayer fights are the bread-and-butter of Worms and finally console players will see what PC Worms fans have known all along—this game rocks over phone lines. There are other new features in this game of humor, physics and weird weapons, such as a Mission mode, a weapon encyclopedia and a nifty Time Attack mode.



Last Blade: Final Edition

Offering over 16 characters, and the rapid-fire, smoothly animated sword-slashing action the series is known for, Last Blade: Final Edition may indeed mark **SNK's** final 2D foray on the Dreamcast (assuming King of Fighters 2000 never makes it over—cross your fingers). Check out all the modes: fighting, story, time attack and training, plus a demo viewer, art gallery and card collecting game. Yowza. It's **out now in Japan.**



Resident Evil 3 Nemesis

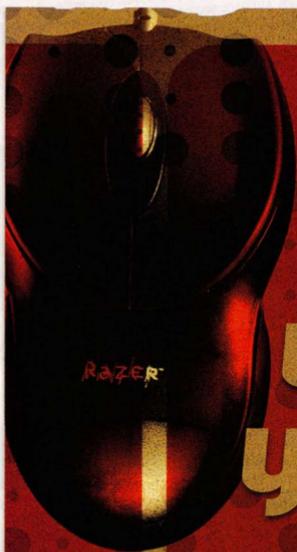
This DC version of the PlayStation classic should be **out now**, but since we haven't gotten a final from **Capcom** yet we had to settle for this small preview. DC Nemesis looks like the PC version—same old models, backgrounds and textures, but at a higher resolution so they look crisp. Now all the costumes and the Mercenaries' minigame are unlocked from the start, plus a health display has been added for the VMU. Cool.



Resident Evil 2

Yup, both RE2 and 3 are coming to the Dreamcast **this month**. What has **Capcom** included for part 2 besides the higher resolution? A gallery to view concept art, character and enemy models, and CG movies, plus the Arrange and Extreme Battle modes from the PlayStation Dual Shock edition. Best of all, the VMU displays not only your health status, but also how much ammo you have left in your weapon.





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PREVIEW
GALLERY



EL DORADO

We know what you are thinking and no, El Dorado Gate does not take place in the city of El Dorado, Ark. It has nothing to do with it. There are no historic gun battle re-enactments every Saturday morning, and no one in the game will ask you to "squeal like a piggy!"

El Dorado Gate, Volume 1

The first edition of **Capcom's** serial RPG (new volumes are due every other month) is **out now in Japan**. The graphics certainly have style: characters by Final Fantasy artist Yoshitaka Amano and nice, soft Saga Frontier 2-ish backgrounds, but the battles look rather dull. The elemental-based combat system is cool, though, and while the game may be short (about five hours or so), it's also quite cheap (about \$26).



Napple Tale

It's a game for little girls. Really. Napple Tale is **Sega's** first action RPG for the Dreamcast, and seems aimed at younger, female players. The gameplay isn't bad (like a simplified Klonoa), but thanks to both its target audience and average visuals, the chances of seeing Napple Tale here are just about nil (it's **out in Japan** but SOA has already passed on it), so your younger sister is plum out of luck.



Surf Rocket Racers

Waverace 64 on Dreamcast. That's basically what **Crave's** new jet-ski racer is. This **December** DC owners will get a taste of what N64 owners were raving about years ago...well, almost. Right now SRR isn't looking or playing quite as well as Waverace. In fact, it's downright icky. The similarities in the two games are almost shameful, but Crave is out to emulate the success of Waverace, so more power to them.



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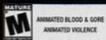


Screenshots from Sega Dreamcast



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woven together by fate, each shall rise
to face their destiny.



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Dreamcast.



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"The level of detail paid to every single moment, circumstance and environment is overwhelming."

Official Dreamcast Magazine

"...undeniably the prettiest role-playing game ever to grace a console."

www.dailyradar.com

"...this will indeed be the first epic RPG on Dreamcast."

www.ign.com

"Grandia II is easily the most impressive next-generation RPG we've seen, and the first true RPG epic for a next-generation console."

www.thegia.com

"Take a new look at what is surely the best-looking RPG yet on a next-generation console..."

Gamer's Republic Online

"...set to give sub-par developers a lesson in how to do a DC RPG right."

GameFan Magazine

"Any RPG fan would be insane to miss out on this fantastic gameplay experience and it could go far in converting those who previously rode the RPG fence."

GamerWeb.com

"If you want your copy of Grandia 2 this holiday season, don't expect Santa's little elves to make you a special copy, pre-order it now or you may not get it until late January."

www.GA-Console.com

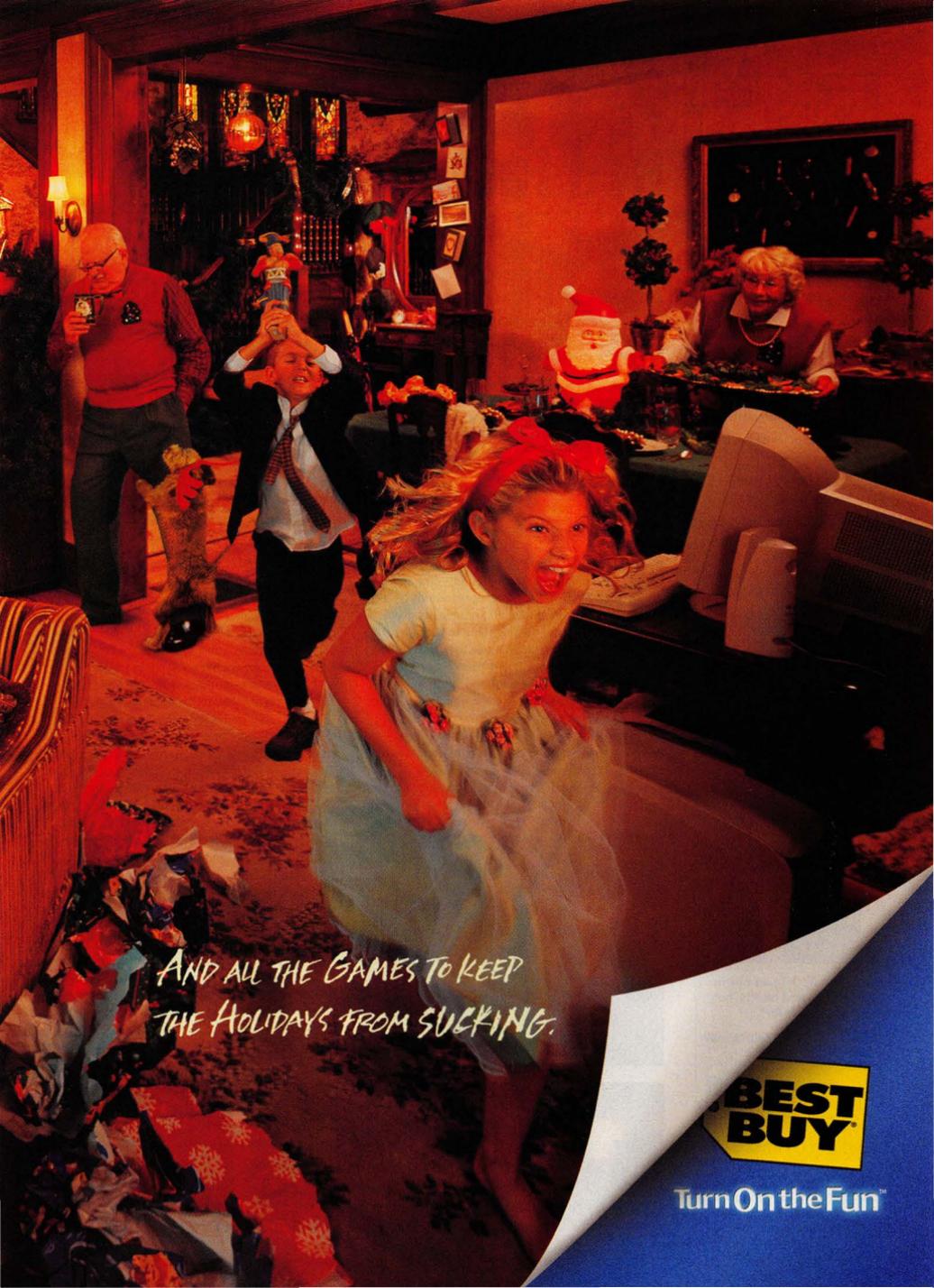
Critically acclaimed and over 2 years in the making, Grandia™ II arrives December 2000.





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Red Faction

Publisher:	THQ
Developer:	Volition
Players:	1-2
Genre:	First-person Shooter
% Done:	40%
Release:	March
Also On:	PC
Web Address:	www.volition-inc.com www.redfaction.com

The Good: Blow apart levels on the fly

The Bad: No larger multi-player modes planned

And The Ugly: The tech after a long day of testing...poor guy



Doors? We don't need no stinkin' doors! Use the heat sensor on your missile launcher to find the bad guys on the other side of those walls, then blow a hole through to say hello.



ANIMATIONS

Kill Tech-Niques

Meet the technician, fix-it guy at the Ultor Mars facility and unofficial guinea pig for the boys at Volition. This poor bastard is the guy everyone uses to test out their new weapons and effects as they are developed. Here he demos Red Faction's location-based hit animations:



Ouch! Mr. Tech takes one in his left arm and recoils, but he's still on his feet...



...nope, that got him. One shot between the eyes drops him like a bag of hammers.

Geo-mod system doesn't sound exciting. In fact, it sounds downright dull—like an option you'd hear “comes standard” on a car commercial. But what it represents makes Red Faction the most exciting thing to happen to first-person shooters since Quake took them online.

Sure some games use bullet holes or scorch marks to show damage, but the Geo-mod (short for Geometry Modification) system in Red Faction takes that idea and runs away with it: You can actually blow real holes in the walls, floors and ceilings. And this means more than just a nifty new layer of realism—it opens up whole new avenues of gameplay, as lead designer at Volition Alan Lawrance explains: “You can blow holes through walls to form

escape routes or attack unsuspecting enemies. You can collapse structures to kill enemies that might otherwise be impossible to kill. You can destroy the cover enemies are hiding behind, cause bridges to collapse, or burrow yourself a nice spot to use for protection.” We've seen it in action and it's indeed impressive (see sidebar on the next page).

The other thing that makes Red Faction so exciting: the physics. You're probably thinking “Physics?! That boring crap I have to sit through in third period?” Yup, that stuff. Check out all the cool stuff that Red Faction's super-physics make possible: When you shoot a window, it shatters out from the bullet hole into tiny shards that realistically fall; when you blow up a window, or a wall—or a group of bad guys, for that matter—the debris flies away from the blast, just like in real life (careful, it can hurt you too); fans and the wind outdoors effect smoke and slow-moving projectiles (like tossed grenades, for example); bullets ricochet off of metal surfaces at the angles you'd expect them to; water and lava pour and pool like real liquids; it's all very kick ass.

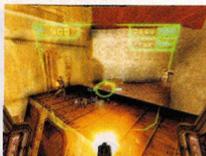
But take away the Geo-mod and the fancy physics, and what would you be left with? Actually, Red Faction would still be shaping up as an excellent first-person shooter. Let's go down the shopping list for what makes any fps worth a damn:

Cool story line: check. You play Parker, a miner on



DESCENT-DENT

Red Faction was actually originally designed as the latest sequel to Volition's fly-anywhere fps *Descent*. Sometimes (as in the fighter jet here) you can see the influence.



SUBMARINE



GIANT DRILLER



TURRET



Check out this groovy sub, complete with torpedo launchers, and Giant Driller, which can burrow through rock and run over enemies without breaking a sweat. There'll be six vehicles you can pilot in Red Faction, plus bigger turret-mounted weapons. But be careful, bad guys like to use them too.



Mars and employee of the Ultor corporation. Horrible working conditions and a mysterious mutation-causing disease known as "the plague" have the workers ready to revolt. As a member of the underground resistance group Red Faction, your goal is to discover what's behind the plague and bring down Ultor. You'll travel through subterranean mine shafts, over the Martian surface—even up to satellites orbiting far above the giant red planet.

Scripted events a la HalfLife: check. And not only does stuff happen as you're playing in the levels to advance the plot, often times you can alter the course of the game by your actions. For example: At one point you might find a guard about to execute a fellow miner. If you don't intervene in time, he's dead meat, but if you do, he'll tell you the location of a weapon storeroom.

Cool weapons: check. The bread and butter of any fps, Red Faction will have 15 weapons, each (like

Unreal Tournament) with two ways of firing them. Some look especially tasty, like the flamethrower: Shoot it normally to light your enemies aflame or turn off the pilot light, spray the liquid all over the hall, and ignite it when your friends walk in. Plus there's plenty of bigger weapons—machine guns and rocket turrets, as well as vehicles with mounted guns and other deadly goodies.

Multiplayer: check...sort of. A two-player split-screen game will be included, but fourplayer looks doubtful since, as Alan explains, "we don't want to dumb down the visuals to the point where it's playable for four." Still, being able to alter the levels of 8-10 multiplayer maps on the fly should provide enough strategic possibilities to keep you and a buddy busy for a long, long time.

So while Red Faction looks like it will be an incredibly unique and innovative title, Volition knows it can't stop there. The guys behind the *Descent* games, who still play *Unreal Tournament* almost daily on the office network to blow off steam, know it's not buzzwords or innovation alone that make a game worth playing. "When it comes down to it, this is a game about action and killing guys," says Lawrence modestly, "we're just trying to make the killing fun." Maybe not exactly fit for congressional testimony, but that's the kind of stuff we like to hear. 🐛

Find a medic to get healed, shoot holes in pipes to hit the bad guys with steam, Metal Gear 2-style, and check out the wind!



GAMEPLAY

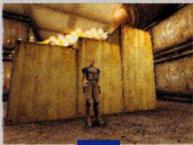
My Way

"One of the goals (for Red Faction)," THQ Senior Producer Jim Boone told us, "is to have different ways of doing things. You can just bulldoze your way through the levels, or, if you want, you can find more creative ways." Here's a couple examples of what he's talking about:

Sure you could try to take this heavily armored troop carrier head on, but how about destroying the bridge it's crossing with a few well-placed charges instead?



Why just shoot this guy when you could blast the column behind him, redirecting white-hot lava onto his twitching body?





PREVIEW

Sky Odyssey

REAL PLANES, NO COMBAT

Sky Odyssey features real planes used in World War II combat like the Swordfish Mk. 1 (shown at left), Pulse jet "Test Type," Bf-109 and the Me-262. Planes don't have artillery, but you can give them spiffy nicknames and put an emblem on the side.



Publisher:	Activision
Developer:	Cross
Players:	1
Genre:	Flying
% Done:	100%
Release:	Available Now
Also Try:	Pilotwings 64
Web Address:	www.activision.com
The Good:	Nothing could be better than flying peacefully through the air, doing loops
The Bad:	Stalling right before reaching a checkpoint ring (damnit)
And The Ugly:	The splat you leave on the wall when you crash



With a hole in your gas tank, the only way to make it to your destination is to dock with a refueling train.



In Target Mode, you have to blast through colored and numbered targets (in order). In harder stages, they're moving.

SSSSMMMOOKIN'!

Writers in the Sky



In Odyssey's Sky Canvas mode, you practice your aerobatics while drawing pictures—connect-the-dot style—in the sky. Stages range from simple circles, squares and pentagons to more difficult artwork, like a smiley face, heart, clock and the word "GOOD!" It's tougher than it looks, but if you get all gold medals you unlock the Auto Gyro. Afterward, a Free mode lets you draw your own designs.

If you look at this and think, "Pilotwings," you're only half right. Yeah, Sky Odyssey has the "fly through the rings" levels, but it also has a whole slew of unique and varied missions of its own.

In this new flight game from Activision, you travel between three islands, uncovering pieces of a lost map as you go. Each area requires you to complete specific objectives before landing on the other side. They get quite creative, too, including landing on an aircraft carrier in inclement weather, saving an out-of-control hot-air balloon from certain doom, rendezvousing with a refueling plane over the ocean and dumping fuel to cross a mountain pass. Of course, there'll be things to get in your way like falling boulders, geysers, water wheels and lava.

Each mission also must be completed within a time limit, and you're given a grade based on your ending score. If you consider yourself an acrobat, try some fancy flyin' for extra points. Two controller configurations make it easy for both flight sim fans and novices to enjoy.

Target, Sky Canvas and Free Flight modes round out the action, plus a handy training mode. Your ultimate goal is to make your way around the three islands, eventually reaching Eden—a place where planes are free to frolic, away from the hustle and bustle of runways and control towers.

Now that you know what it's all about, see what the Review Crew thought of Sky Odyssey in PS2 reviews this issue. 🛩️



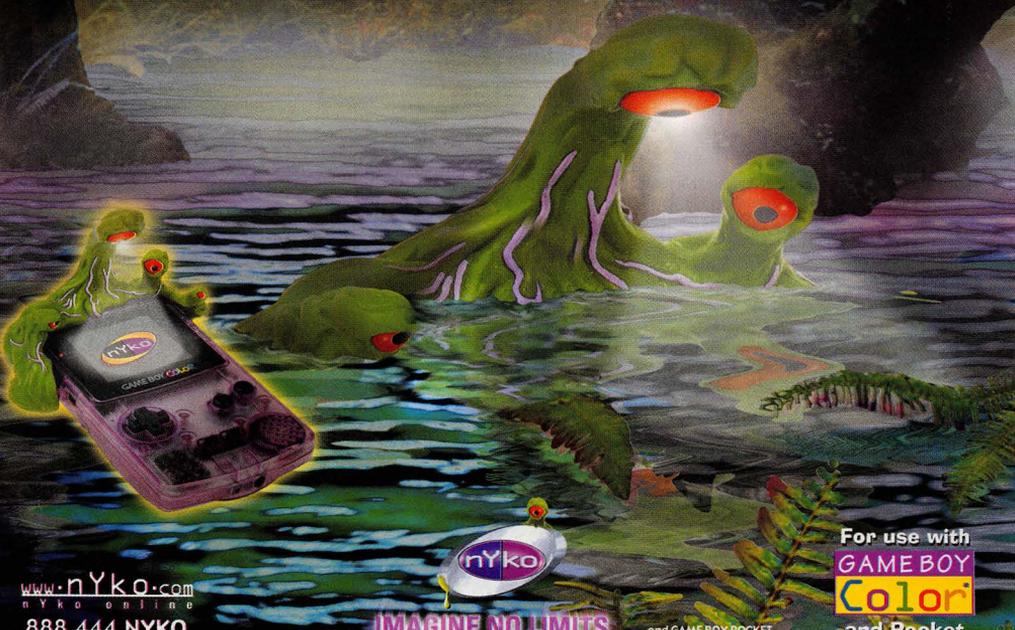
Space Oddity

Completing different modes unlocks new aircraft (like this UFO from Target mode). This baby takes off like a bat outta hell and makes tight turns, but is hard to see around.



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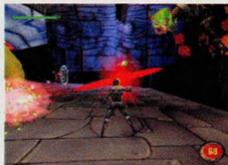
The Getaway

Developed by **SCEE's SoHo Studio** in north London, *The Getaway* is certainly shaping up to be something that's both an impressive display of the PS2's abilities and a contentious subject for online journalists. The screens we have here certainly *are* gameplay. They're not touched up—this really is what it looks like. When the game is released by **SCEA** in the middle of next year we're assured it will look even better.



MDK2 Armageddon

MDK2 is heading from the DC to the PS2 this **winter** thanks to **Interplay**, and offers a few new features to justify the name extension. While the subtitle *Armageddon* might bring images of heavily upgraded graphics or original levels, all this "new" version offers is in-game hints to help you pass tough spots, adjustable difficulty, and more control options than the DC release. That's OK, we liked it enough as is anyway.



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RACE 4 OFFLINE	HUGE ONLINE MATCH 5	6	RACE 7 OFFLINE w/ mace	RACE 8 VOLCANO BEST LAP 1:24	9	10
11	RACE 12 ODDROCK BEST LAP 5:20	13	ONLINE MATCH 14 BEST LAP 3:21	15	RACE 16 ALL DAY - CALL IN SICK	ONLINE MATCH 17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24

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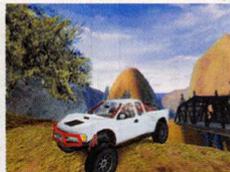


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Test Drive Off-Road: Wide Open

Infogrames and Angel Studios are bringing the Test Drive series to the dirt-trails of the PS2. Using the Smuggler's Run engine, the wide-open environments of SR will make their way into this "go anywhere" racer, along with 16 licensed vehicles (Jeep, Dodge, Humvee, etc.) and 30 dirt-eatin' tracks. Players will be able to go all over the place in Utah, Yosemite and Hawaii. TDORW will be available next summer.



Championship MX 2002 Featuring Ricky Carmichael

The THQ game with the longest title on earth is on target for a **summer 2001** release. Developer **Pacific Coast Power and Light Company** (geesh, another long one) is hard at work—you might recall their previous effort, Road Rash for the N64, a so-so offering at best. Let's hope this one turns out better). Unfortunately, we haven't had a hands-on test but judging by these stats, it's fairly deep—28 pro riders, 20 motocross, supercross and freestyle events (12 licensed and eight fantasy) plus 16 customizable bikes. The multiplayer modes (six total) sound cool too: They include target jumping, stunt showdown and challenge race.



King's Field IV

By now this series should be pretty familiar to everyone—it had three chapters on the PS. The fourth edition of **From Software's** first-person RPG series is due this **March in Japan**, and it looks like more than just the graphics will be realistic: From Software has added a few new features, a non-linear story, the ability to move while defending, and a weight limit on the amount of equipment you can carry are all planned.



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PlayStation 2



Animated Violence
Mild Language



Our games go to 11!



PREVIEW GALLERY

THE GAME-NAME GAME

Core tossed around several potential names for Herdy Gerdy, including "The Last Acorn," before settling on the final, oddball title. "Either you love the name or you hate the name," Core's Adrian Smith told us. "The folks in our American office hate the name, but it's our game, so nya-nya."

Cool Boarders Code Alien

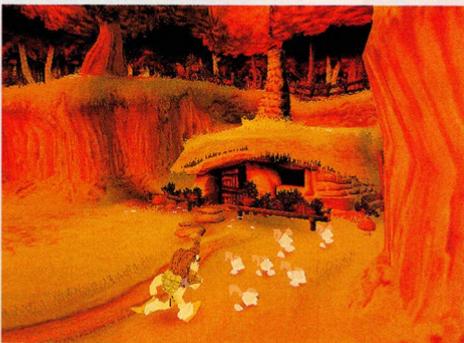
Why in the world the word alien is in the same title as Cool Boarders is beyond us, but if that's what **UEP Systems** wants to call it, so be it. Yaggi and Inn, two characters from the second CB, return along with the same blend of racing and tricks the series is known for. Several licensed snowboards are available for use in "Board Parks" (that exist solely for you to do tricks), half-pipes, and indoor and outdoor tracks. The Japanese version of the game, due in **December**, features some licensed bands, but we're not sure which ones will stay or be added for the domestic version just yet. As we get closer to Cool Boarder's U.S. release this **spring**, we'll let you know. One thing's for sure—the competition in this genre is a whole lot tougher now that SSX is out.



Herdy Gerdy

The guys at **Core Design** have been working on this genre-defying adventure/puzzle/herding game for, well...longer than they care to admit. In fact, Herdy Gerdy—due in **March**—was originally conceived as a Nintendo 64 project, until Core showed the concept to Sony a few years ago. "They were like, 'How about doing this on PlayStation 2?'" Core Design's Adrian Smith told us. "We said, 'How about giving us a dev kit and we will.'" Sony, apparently, was excited by Herdy Gerdy's novel gameplay, which has you—as a shepherd named Gerdy—herding critters who frolic in a wild kingdom of oddball animals. All the beasts interact with Gerdy and each other in a variety of ways. The game has a food chain, for instance, so if you use the bell power-up to attract the tiny animals you need to herd, you'll also attract the bigger beasts who dine on those animals. It makes for a complex ecosystem kinda like the one promised in the now Xbox-only Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee. "If Gerdy runs through a group of cows and they scatter," Smith said, "they might scatter a group of animals you need to herd and make your job harder. It's like dropping a stone into a pool and watching the ripples go out."

So, long story short, Core got one of the very first PS2 dev kits, and Herdy Gerdy is one of the first games built to take advantage of the hardware. "People who complain about PS2 and say it doesn't have enough memory should come work on Gerdy," Smith said, "because 90 percent of the textures seen in the world are specifically drawn for that area, so you don't see a patch of grass again and again." This mountain of texture data has forced Core to ship Herdy Gerdy on DVD instead of CD. "It's the closest we've seen so far to a Disney movie," Smith said.



SILPHHEED

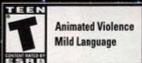
THE LOST PLANET

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Hope for the Best
Pray for a Savior

"A visual feast for PS2 owners...in shooter heaven."
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PlayStation 2



Kurikuri Mix

It's about time we had a cutesy game for the PS2 to prove not everyone (including **From Software**) is taking the big bad black system too seriously. *Kurikuri Mix* might just be the next big puzzle game, with 40 levels, bosses and lots of sweet, sweet eye candy. The story charges two rabbit-like protagonists to recover a run-away moon (man, if that idea hasn't been done to death...). It's due out in **December**.



DNA

Check out the art style on this one! With the look and feel of a comic book brought to life, *DNA* is shaping up like *Metal Gear Solid* with a bio-engineering twist. You can equip several bionic chips with different abilities to alter your skills as you battle through seven stages to regain your memory and identity. **Hudson** mixes action, shooting and puzzles into one big cel-shaded mix this **winter**.



Hajime No Ippo

This new boxing game (based on an anime of the same name) is due **December** from **ESP**. The story revolves around a young man named Ippo who's dreamt of becoming a great boxer ever since he saw Tyson fight (seriously). Each of the PS2's four buttons correspond to punches—two jabs and two hooks (one right and one left), plus shoulder buttons for uppercuts and dodge and swing with the analog stick.



Dog of Bay

Sure, *Dog of Bay* has a strange name, and the pictures don't exactly convey a normal-looking game...OK, we admit it. This game looks goofy as hell. **Tam Soft** (Toshinden) has gone off the deep end or something. You see, each of the human/dog/late '80s rockers you can control have a distinct personality, and during your "push the buttons to match the music beat" adventure, you'll learn about the trials and tribulations that make up each of these dog's lives. It's like the theatrical play *Cats*, but with dogs. We think. Anyway, the gameplay is linked to the four circles that surround the heart on the bottom of the screen, each of them represent a button on the PS2's controller, and you have to hit them with perfect timing as bubbles from the side of the screen float in front of them. Bet you just can't wait until **December**.



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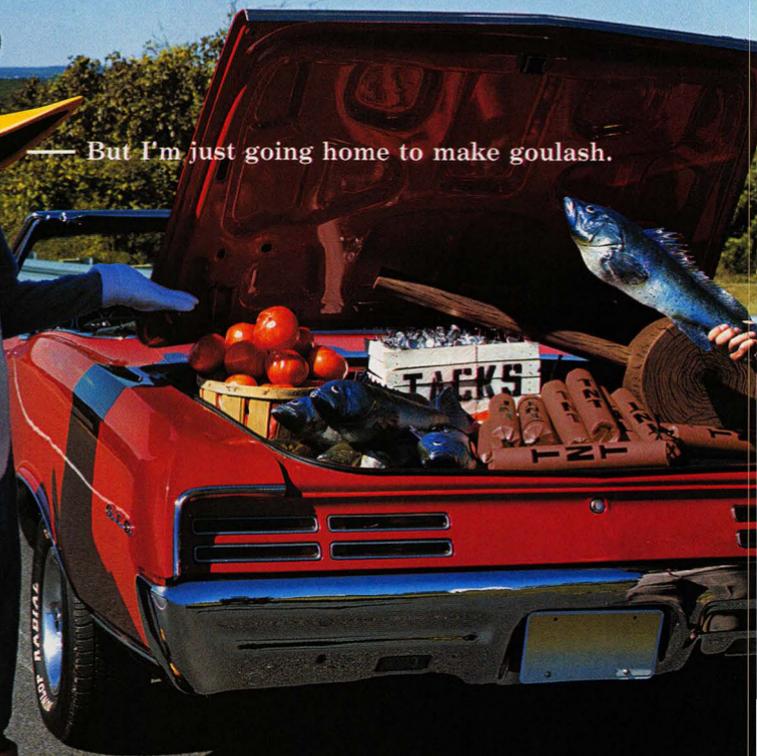


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Avoid the Boxing Gloves



Zap 'Em with Space Mouse's Raygun

WOODY WOODPECKER RACING



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PREVIEW

Lunar 2: Eternal Blue Complete

Publisher:	Working Designs
Developer:	Game Arts
Players:	1
Genre:	RPG
% Done:	95%
Release:	December
Also On:	Sega CD
Web Address:	www.workingdesigns.com
The Good:	Awesome story and animated sequences
The Bad:	Dated graphics
And The Ugly:	Borgan naked



...and girls don't show their no-no parts to boys until they get married!



Men were men, and women were objects. The way it's posed to be in a joint like this!



By now everyone should know the drill. The story in Lunar 2: Eternal Blue Complete plays out through a mixture of animated cutscenes, humorous dialogue and more than enough battles. While the love story is more subtle in this new revised version, Lucia (left) is definitely more apt to showing off all her "parts" to Hiro early on.

FREE SWAG

Pack-ins

Just like the last game in the series, the 2 lb. Lunar 2 package comes with a ridiculous amount of cool extras, including: a soundtrack, a making-of disc, Lucia's gold pendant, 1/16th character standees, a map and hard-bound instruction booklet. Plus a cool Ghaleon puppet if you preorder.



In RPG circles the term "sequel" is used very loosely. Many times the only real link between two games in a series is the title and a few obscure references thrown in here and there. Often they take place on different worlds (we assume) and feature characters and plots that have little, if anything, to do with previous installments.

That's part of what makes Lunar 2 so enticing: Unlike so many other RPG sequels, Eternal Blue doesn't let the rich history created by the original game go to waste. Although it takes place 1,000 years later, Alex, Nall and friends have not been forgotten. As you travel the new land of Lunar you'll notice some familiar landmarks, come across the same towns, and even meet up with some descendants of the original heroes. Visit Ramus' shop in Meribia or the Ausa family in the Vane mansion. Go west of the fallen magic city to find Taben's Peak, which is really the overgrown ruins of the Grindery (get it? Taben being the original designer of the Grindery and all). There are even guest appearances by some of the more magical

characters from Silver Star Story, but we won't give that away here.

Based on how hunky-dory everything was at the end of Silver Star Story, you'd think Lunar would be a great place to live, right? Not quite. It seems the goddess' chosen (a cult that rules through fear) are running amok. The four heroes of the goddess seem odd, following orders that are far too evil to have been issued by Athena. It's in this world of turmoil that Hiro begins his quest. Just like the last game, our hero runs across other troubled souls who join his cause for reasons of their own.

Of course, all of this is being brought to U.S. audiences by Working Designs, who've long been known for their ability to tell a great story through good writing and above-average voice acting. Lunar 2 is no different. Actually, in keeping with the developer's original vision of a more grown-up Lunar game, their translation features less playground humor than their localization of the Sega CD original (something we're sure will please more than a few of the RPG fans who are so vocal about "pure" scripts

MEET THE CAST

HIRO



Our brave hero, named, uh...Hiro, is a young man who hopes to one day embark on an adventure worthy of his idol: Dragonmaster Alex.

You can probably see where this is going, right?

RUBY



This wisecracking little "flying cat" doesn't pull any punches. Sound familiar? She's got an unhealthy crush on Hiro, who she's been with since before either of them can remember.

LUCIA



The mysterious visitor from the Blue Star, some believe Lucia has been sent to destroy Lunar. She insists that's not the case. Not surprisingly, Hiro believes her.

APPLES TO ORANGES



Sega CD



PlayStation

A Tale of Two CDs



Sega CD



PlayStation

Submitted for your approval: a couple Sega CD Lunar 2 shots and their PlayStation counterparts. You'll notice a drastic difference between the cinemas, but even the overworld graphics have a much more organic look. Yeah, we're sure you're shocked.



One of the improvements in Lunar 2 is a color-coded damage indicator. Red means you're likely to do little damage, yellow is neutral and green means you're gonna lay a hurtin' on whatever you hit.

in their games).

So what's the point? No matter how you slice it, this is simply a remake of an old Sega CD game, right? Well, sort of. Lunar 2 definitely hasn't undergone as many changes as the prequel did, simply because the Sega CD version of Lunar 2 was so much longer and more involved than the original Sega CD Silver Star. However, that's not to say things haven't been enhanced. In the original Sega CD Eternal Blue, sometimes you were left a little confused, positive that you'd just witnessed some important link between the first game and the second, but unsure as to what it was. With this remake, Game Arts made the connections between

the two games much more obvious, mostly thanks to high-quality video sequences (some as long as seven minutes!) featuring that great art style from the last game.

With the success of Silver Star Story Complete on the PS and the current level of preorders on Eternal Blue, Working Designs is predicting this title will be their best-selling piece of software to date. Not only that, but the projected U.S. sales are more than all three Japanese versions (Sega CD, Saturn and PlayStation) combined! Personally we could care less about sales numbers—that is, as long as it's enough to guarantee a part three to this fantastic series somewhere down the road. 🐉

RONFAR

On the surface, Ronfar is a gambler without a care in the world. Of course, that's just a mask he wears to help him forget about his shady past and lost love.



JEAN

Jean is the best dancer in the history of the carnival. A girl with a troubled past (heard that one before?), she tries hard to suppress her fighting ability.



LEMINA

Lemina is a descendant of Mia and the Junior Premier of Vane. She seems more interested in money than anything else.



GIRLS ON FILM

Bromides

The Bromides (high-res pictures of the characters you can find hidden throughout the game) are back! This time collect pics of your female party members, girls from the previous game and even some images of the guys in Lunar 2 ('cause hey, nobody wants to be labeled sexist or anything). Take a gander at a few examples below:





PREVIEW

Evil Dead: Hail to the King

Publisher: THQ
Developer: Heavy Iron Studios
Players: 1
Genre: Survival Horror
% Done: 75%
Release: Winter
Also On: Dreamcast
Web Address: www.thq.com
The Good: Bruce!
The Bad: Fallen enemies constantly regenerate
And The Ugly: The bloody mess left by Ash spinning deadites 'round on his chainsaw



The game opens up with a cinema recounting the events chronicled in the film trilogy. It all starts with the discovery of an ancient text...

Your adventure begins in familiar surroundings. Beware the things that go bump in the woods.



GAME STORY

Evil Dead 4?

This game has been produced with the blessing of director Sam Raimi, and stands as an official chapter in the *Evil Dead* time line. Slick character-generated cinemas pop up throughout the game, providing fans with the first new "footage" of Ash to surface since 1993.



Ah, the *Evil Dead* Trilogy. Few films in the horror genre are as quoted, imitated or revered. Fans of the franchise have been begging for a new installment since *Army of Darkness* hit theaters in 1993, to no avail. At this point, fellow splatter buffs, it seems that we will never bear witness to a fourth film. But fear not... Heavy Iron Studios has made certain that we have not seen the last of Ash, the series' knucklehead warrior. This brand-new interactive chapter brings him back to the malevolent woods that set the stage for *Evil Dead 1* and *2*. Wanting to determine if the experiences chronicled in the films were real or elaborate dreams, Ash and his girlfriend drive to a familiar forest cabin. Once there, a sinister specter abducts our hero's gal, forcing him to load his shotgun, fuel his chain saw, and kick some ass.

Then, midway through the game, a second act begins, sending our hero back through time. Just as

in *Army of Darkness*, Ash enlists the aid of medieval clansmen to continue his quest. The hero's interactions with these ancient citizens makes for some hilarious dialogue, reflecting the third film's comic tone. A new series of conflicts arise: Will Ash reclaim his girlfriend from an evil incarnation of himself? Can a spinach-chinned scribe help our hero return home? Is Ash's jalopy capable of starting up after travelling through time and surviving a crash landing?

Hail to the King uses the Resident Evil series as a template for presentation and control—if you have battled through any of Capcom's survival horror adventures, navigating *Evil Dead* should be second nature. Ash rotates on a fixed axis (no matter what direction you face, pressing up always moves your character forward). You can run by holding down a shoulder button and the backgrounds are prerendered. Axes, firearms and various saw blades are on hand to slice, smash and blast through phantoms that stand in your way. If an undead gong gets too close to Ash's chainsaw, it'll get impaled on the blade and spun around like a pinwheel. You'll want to dole out your vengeance selectively, though: Ammo is quite limited. And be choosy about what you hold and what you leave behind: Ash can't carry his entire inventory at one time, and anything that can't be held must be stored in a wooden chest. Getting caught without a key item or enough ammo

Cont. on page 134

Dark, foreboding backdrops give the game the feel of a top-flight horror film. This is definitely a game best played with all the lights turned off.





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The Evil Dead Trilogy has secured a legion of fans throughout the world. Check out the EVIL DEAD Web ring at http://nav.web.ring.org/hub?ring=evil_dead&list

GROOVY TAUNTS

What's My Line?



Ash's penchant for sarcastic one-liners has made him a fan favorite. Heavy Iron Studios has worked this element of the film into their game by implementing a "taunt" command. Hit the triangle button at any time during play, and Bruce Campbell will blurt out one of Ash's many put-downs. Are all men from our time loud-mouthed braggarts? Nope. Just Ash, baby. Just Ash.



"Come get some."



"Good? Bad? I'm the guy with the gun."



"Oh! You little..."



About midway through the game, Ash is transported to medieval times. Those who regard *Army of Darkness* as the best film in the trilogy will take delight in messing with the townsfolk. "Primitive screwheads" indeed.

is a very real danger. Sound familiar?

The prerendered backgrounds are dark and atmospheric, invoking a mood that Sam Raimi himself would be proud of. Interiors are lovingly detailed to match the film sets to a tee—pop in the DVD of *Evil Dead 2*, compare, and come away astonished. Exterior environmental effects bring the settings to life: Trees sway subtly in the wind, day turns to night, and fire gives an orange hue to surrounding foliage.

It's clear the developers are die-hard fans of director Sam Raimi's work—they really tried to re-create both the horror and the humor of the feature films. Take the inclusion of a "taunt" button, which allows Ash to break out with some of his legendary one-liners. Thought it was cool to hear Duke Nukem shamelessly quote *Evil Dead's* famed protagonist? Imagine getting to hear the words come from the man himself: Bruce Campbell. The actor provides Hail to the King with all of Ash's witty verbiage.



Hail to the King puts its audio to work in other areas as well. Ever gone to a horror movie and seen audience members cover their eyes before something creepy is going to happen? Audio cues can often do more to keep viewers on the edge of their seat than any amount of explicit gore can. The Resident Evil and Dino Crisis games are proof positive of that. If the pouncing chord that accompanied the mass of outstretched zombie arms in Resident Evil 2 made you jump, just wait 'til you hear the demons in Hail to the King giggling like children. Creaking doors, crackling campfires and howling winds make this game a great one to play in a room with a stereo surround setup.

It all sounds good so far...so what, then, could keep this from being a "must-own" title? For starters, the characters in this preview could use some work in the animation and texture departments. The control scheme can also be quite frustrating when you're being charged from all sides by regenerating enemies. And hopefully, the instant 180° turn—now a survival horror staple—will be added.

All in all Heavy Iron Studios seems to have a firm grasp on what has made the film series a cult favorite, and they've gone to great lengths to bring it home to the consoles. Now it's all up to those crucial final weeks of polish. 

The bizarre stop-motion demons of the films are faithfully re-created here. These mischievous specters will chase Ash from screen to screen, stopping only when some buckshot knocks them back to the ethereal plane. Heavy Iron Studios has created some original nasties as well.





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PREVIEW

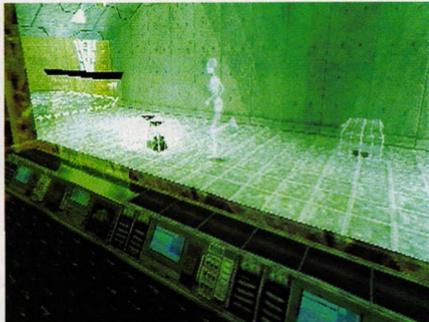
Tomb Raider Chronicles

Publisher:	Eidos
Developer:	Core Design
Players:	1
Genre:	Adventure
% Done:	85%
Release:	December
Also On:	Dreamcast
Web Address:	www.eidos.com
The Good:	Core's going for lots of variety and originality
The Bad:	Yet another Tomb Raider game
And The Only:	We wish Eidos would just take this to PS2 already



The sniper scope is more useful in the new game. Sometimes Lara will even have to shoot the locks off doors to proceed.

Total Recall, anyone? It looks like Arnie's sci-fi hit left a lasting impression on Core Design.



BODY MOVIN'

New Moves

The lovely Ms. Croft is sporting a few new moves this time out. Now when she sees a set of shelves, she can actually rummage through them to find ammo and medipacks. Lara's also now apparently an accomplished tightrope walker. Walk up to any rope and hit the action button—Lara puts an arm to each side and ventures out. If she starts to sway in one direction, just push the opposite way to maintain balance. It's nice to know that whenever this archaeology gig finally wears thin, she'll be able to find work in the circus.



What that you say? You thought Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation was supposed to be the final time you'd see Lara's face on the PS one? Silly rabbit. Haven't you noticed Eidos says that every time a Tomb Raider game goes on sale? Surprise! Lara's back for one final—really final!—PlayStation adventure. Really. One last one. We promise.

If it makes you feel any better, this isn't exactly a sequel. Chronicles takes place at a memorial service for Lara (that's right, she's dead. Check out the sidebar on the next page). On a cold, gray afternoon at the Croft estate her closest friends gather to recount some of her more exciting adventures. So basically the entire game is made up of four elaborate flashbacks in locations like the Ruins of Rome, a German U-Boat and a high-tech high-rise. Oh, and "young Lara" makes a return appearance (pedophiles rejoice!).

You have to admit the story is pretty original, and Core is adamant that the rest of the game will please Tomb fans as well. "Without a doubt, this is the best game in the series so far," says director of development Adrian Smith, "It enhances what we've done in the past—it's the consolidation of everything we've



done before. It adds a little bit of backstory to Lara, and it actually ties up the loose ends for us so we can start Tomb Raider the Next Generation." What he means is that most of Chronicles plays like different games in the series' past: In the Roman Ruins, Lara's exploits are a lot like the original game: a decent balance of action and puzzle solving. The German U-Boat resembles Tomb Raider III in that Lara has to rely on her guns more than her wits. Finally, young Lara returns from Tomb IV—again without any weapons—to trap ghostly antagonists in a spooky setting.

So is this just a bunch of bits from all the old games rolled into one and slapped with a new price tag? Not quite. The real reason Eidos thinks it's worth your time to play through yet another Tomb Raider is the totally new high-rise setting. Probably the most original thing to be seen in a Tomb Raider title since the first game was released, the whole point is stealth (think Metal Gear Solid meets Perfect Dark). Rather than shooting guards and other ne'er-do-wells, Lara has the option to sneak up behind them and knock them out with chloroform. The enemy AI has been adapted to this new play mechanic as well. "Baddies are triggered by sound now. If you run through the level with guns a blazing, it's going to make the level four times as hard as if you sneak around and take baddies out selectively," says Smith. Better watch out for traps, too. They include

Cont. on page 140

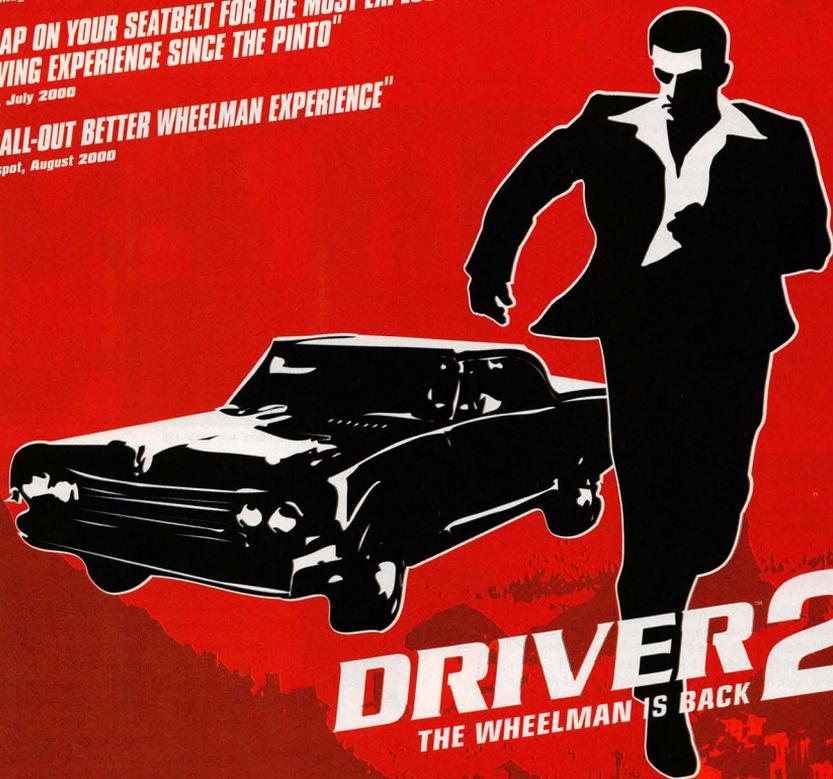


Talk about a star-studded cast. Death himself appears in young Lara's Halloween-inspired levels.

"THE ULTIMATE GETAWAY GAME GETS EVEN BETTER"
PSM Magazine, July 2000

"STRAP ON YOUR SEATBELT FOR THE MOST EXPLOSIVE
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Incite, July 2000

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PREVIEW

HORSING AROUND

File this under "Thank God They Didn't Do That." According to Adrian Smith, there was a time when Lara was going to be riding a horse in Tomb Raider. "We once toyed with the idea of putting Lara on a horse, and then we discovered she could go anywhere on the map and jump off it and jump fences. We couldn't have that. The horse is history."

LARA'S DEAD?

At the risk of spoiling a game you may not have finished yet: Lara Croft is dead. OK, not really, but she did appear to die at the end of Tomb Raider IV. The story goes something like this:

After stealing the Amulet of Horus from the Tomb of Seth, Lara unleashed a horrible Egyptian curse upon the land. So of course, she faced the angry god and made things right again. Unfortunately, the pyramid then began to collapse around her. As she escaped, her mentor-cum-rival, Dr. Von Croy, blocked her path. Although he unexpectedly offered a helping hand to Lara, she was unsure of his motives. As the saying goes, she who hesitates is lost, and thus the pyramid fell to pieces before Lara could escape. Rest in peace (yeah, right).



Cont. from page 138

FOUR PLAY

Lara's World

Tomb Raider Chronicles has roughly four different areas of play that all the levels fall under:

Roman Ruins

Even though the idea of Roman Ruins conjures up images of the first game, don't get too excited. Most of these levels take place outside, or in very modern-day factories. At a few points Lara will venture back into more historical settings and deal with a variety of nefarious traps, but not that often.



U-Boat

The German U-Boat represents everything we've come to dislike about past Tomb games. Far too much gunplay and not enough tomb raiding. Although things do get kind of cool when the sub starts to sink while Lara's still in it. There are still gun-toting goons who care more about killing her than escape, though.



Young Lara

No matter how disturbing you find young Lara, you have to admit the idea behind the third set of levels in Chronicles is pretty damn cool. No weapons, a Resident Evil-esque theme and the ability to trap ghosts 'n goblins. Core employs some nice rain effects to add atmosphere.



High Rise

By far the coolest idea in Chronicles, this last set of levels has Lara creeping around an office building in a sleek black cat suit. No complaints here. It's about time this series got a shot of originality. Note to Core: If you're gonna take Lara out of the caves, have her do stuff like this more often, and keep the catsuit.



metal detectors and lasers, not to mention a very cool X-Ray scene (big pic at the start of the preview).

The one thing PS players will miss out on is the full-featured level editor being included in the PC version of Tomb Raider Chronicles. Ah well, we figure that's the price of owning an aging console with no form of mass storage.

Speaking of aging console, why isn't Core just waiting for the PS2? Why not add new features like the level editor to the first outing on hot new hardware rather than showing your hand on a system who's days are numbered? Apparently they wanted to release the game in tandem with the movie (due this May), and didn't have enough time with the PS2 development tools to do the game on the new system. The irony is that Chronicles has been finished so quickly that it should see release before the end of this year, and well before the feature film.

At least with all the new play mechanics and episodic setup of the game, there's something to be excited about this time. Chronicles is the closest we've seen to emulating the original TR concept. That in itself is worth checking out. Whether or not that makes it worth your hard-earned cash is something we'll discuss in our review next month. 🐱



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PREVIEW
GALLERY

Gundam Battle Assault

After the oft-rumored, but never delivered Gundam Battle Master games passed us by, the chances looked slim that **Bandai** would ever bring an installment of the series to the States. At last Gundam Battle Assault, the newest of the series, is set to arrive in **winter 2005**. Lacing the Gundam Wing story line into the game, you select from one of nine initial mechs and take it through its paces. The animation in the Battle Masters games has always been super-fluid since the robots are made up of a marionette-like set of pieces that animate individually (instead of the usual Street Fighter-like cell animation). The gameplay is better-suited to button-mashing than finesse, but Gundam fans will probably be happy just seeing one of these games make it to America.



Jungle Book Rhythm n' Groove

Ubi Soft dips its toe in the water of the dancing game genre with this offering, targeted at younger players. You face jungle-dwelling characters from the movie, learning dance moves along the way. Each opponent has three "lessons" which you must complete, with rendered cutscenes in between stages in story mode. It works just like Dance! Dance! Revolution, but you can obtain special power-ups by doing extra steps in between normal moves. Music includes two tracks from the movie, a Lou Bega remix of "I Wanna Be Like You," and seven original songs. (We know, Lou Bega's 15 minutes of fame are long over, but hey, it's not a bad song.) It's **available now**, either separately or with a dance pad.



You Don't Know Jack, Mock 2

The game where high culture and pop culture collide is making a comeback on the PlayStation this **winter** thanks to **Sierra**. This sequel, which seems loosely based on the latest PC version, contains more of the irrelevant questions and cool minigames that we've come to love. The ultimate party game, up to three people can play at once. If you haven't been screwed in YDKJ, you simply haven't lived.



Disney's Toy Story Racer

Here's a good one for the kiddies. Buzz, Woody and the whole Toy Story gang take part in this kart racing-inspired game from **Traveler's Tales**. Compete on 19 different courses set in familiar locations from both *Toy Story* movies. Beyond multiplayer action and a ton of challenges, there are chasing, stunt-driving, collecting and contest modes to experience. **Activision** will release DTSR, but not until **March 2005**.



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Score: 9 out of 10 -

For a truly realistic martial arts game, this one's a knockout."

- ODM



5 out of 5 stars - Revolutionary!

- Next Generation

DC UFC Ranked #1 Title at Launch'

- NPD TRST Weekly Data

'Crave scores a knock-out: 'Direct Hit' Rating

Easily the most realistic, and definitely one of the most fun fighting games to ever come along."

- DailyRadar.com

UFC is a great game that could easily stand on it's own merits without this fantastic license."

- GameFan

UFC is poised to set the next standard in the fighting genre."

- GamePro



90 out of 100: The best American-published fighting game in years."

- GameFan



"The ebb and flow of ground grappling makes for something like a brutal chess match..."

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"We might be looking at Fighting Game of the Year here."

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BACK

Twisted
Metal

IN

BLACK

Rush-hour traffic. Hordes of pedestrians. Real-time weather. Ultra-deep gameplay. Car combat's about to be reinvented on your Playstation 2.





It's a simple message, but one developer Incognito Studios wants to drive home with all the force of a head-on collision: "Twisted Metal: Black will be a total redemption of the franchise," says Scott Campbell, Incognito president and producer of TM:

Black, due in early summer for the PlayStation 2. Campbell knows that many gamers have become disenchanted with the Twisted Metal series ever since now-defunct 989 Studios took over development duties from Singletrac in 1997 and went on to unleash the less-than-spectacular Twisted Metal 3 and 4.

But that was then. Now, the guys who put the car-combat concept on the map are back in the driver's seat. TM: Black's team is comprised of all the key guys who worked on the original Twisted Metal and TM2, the game many consider the pinnacle of this high-octane genre. In a sense, Incognito—which formed in spring 1999—is a reincarnation of the original Singletrac. More than half its employees are former Singletrac staff. And the company is once again working hand-in-hand with Sony, which owns the Twisted Metal name and publishing rights. "We've restored the same relationship that worked for Twisted Metal 1 and 2," Campbell tells us. "The relationship between Sony Santa Monica and Incognito is a collaborative team effort from design to test." Dave Jaffe, who was director and lead designer of TMs 1 and 2, is once again heading up development from Sony's end. Long story short: The developers have all the pieces in place to restore the Twisted Metal series to its former reign as king of the car-combat junkyard.

Disturbing and dark (see the sidebar to find out why), this new installment veers away from the cartoony themes of the prequels. "Twisted Metal:



FOR THE QUEEN! FOR NABOO!



RATING PENDING
RP
The ESRB rating for this game is pending. For more information on video game ratings, visit www.esrb.org.



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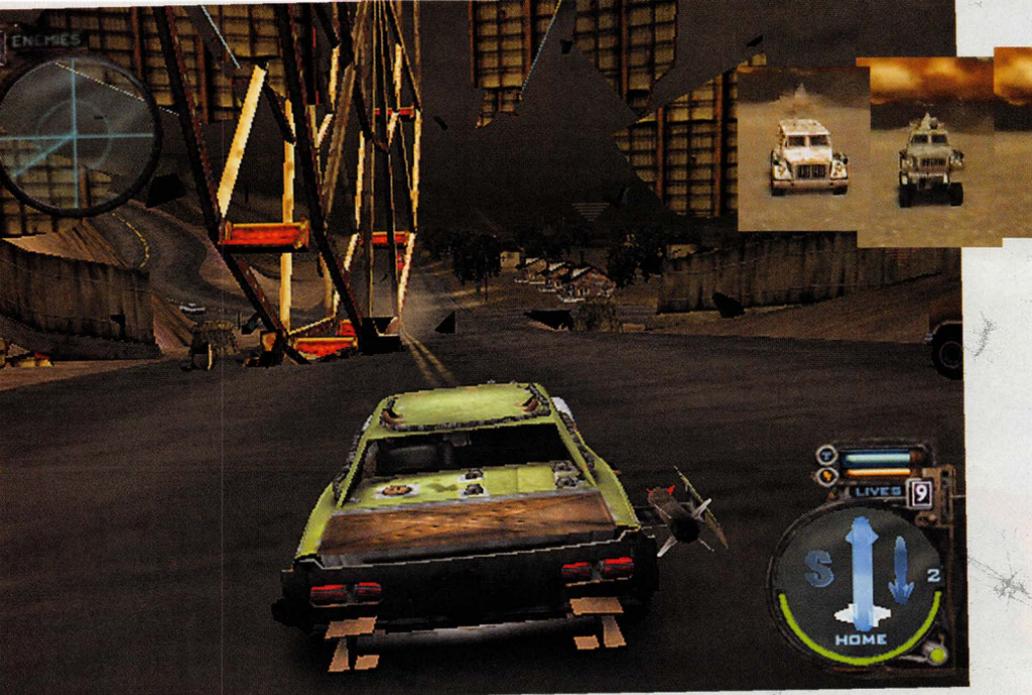
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TM: Black's cars bristle with detailed moving parts, while the draw distance rivals that of Smuggler's Run. Heck, the whole game just looks way better than any of that disappointing launch-day stuff—and it moves at a blazing 60 frames per second. The gameplay's faster, too. Drive defensively and you'll outrun missiles.



Black doesn't even acknowledge the other games in terms of story and universe and characters and things like that," Jaffe tells us. "We're using the same foundation. There is a character who's called Calypso, but he's incredibly different from what's come before. It's almost like if you took Twisted Metal 2 and viewed it through the eyes of a serial killer."

About seven of the game's 10 or so initially playable characters will be new to the series. And even recurring characters have undergone re-shaping in Incognito's body shop. "There are a number of characters that are clearly inspired by the earlier games," Jaffe says. "Obviously, there's a character named Sweet Tooth, and he drives an ice-cream truck, but his character and his vehicle design and his special weapon are totally different. There are three to six characters that I'd call recurring, but it's not actually the same character coming back."

One thing that hasn't changed, however, is Incognito and Sony's commitment to building the ultimate car-combat experience, or "Street Fighter II on wheels" as Jaffe puts it. TM Black's selection of play modes reflects that design philosophy. Don't look for novelties like Rogue Trip's drive-the-tourist mode in this game. TM: Black packs more straightforward stuff. You get a one-player story mode, in which you learn about your character and battle the occasional

boss. Good news: Just like in TM2, you can play the story mode cooperatively with a buddy. Solo players can also jump into the instant-action Challenge mode, as well as a special Endurance mode. Here, you're dropped into the level of your choice, where you face opponents who attack one at a time. You won't find any health; your goal is to defeat as many consecutive enemies as possible until they get the better of you.

But let's get to the really important stuff: the multiplayer modes. As you'd expect, TM: Black offers split-screen deathmatching (Sony has yet to confirm whether it will support four-players, but we figure it's a safe bet). Aside from that basic kill-'em-all mode, you'll find a game called Last Man Standing, in which each player gets all 10 vehicles held in reserve, kinda like extra lives. If an enemy blows you up, you switch to the next vehicle in your list and the battle continues—until you run out of reserve cars. The last player driving wins. Incognito and Jaffe are toying with the idea of including more game types, but chances are Deathmatch, Cooperative and Last Man Standing will be the only three multiplayer modes that'll wind up in the game. "A lot of modes I've seen in these games don't really work well in split screen," Jaffe says, "and they take away developers' time to focus on the core of the game, which to us is deathmatch."

None More Black?



TM: Black will pack up to 11 levels for the one-player game and as many as 18 multiplayer maps. And it's not until you take a test drive in these arenas that you see how this series is reaching its full potential on the PS2. Levels are much more interactive. Barrel through houses in the suburbs, for example, and watch 'em explode into concrete splinters. You can drive through and blow up a lot more stuff than you could in the previous games but "not everything is interactive," Jaffe explains, "because if it was, suddenly your detailed levels look like wide-open fields, because you can blow everything up and there's nothing to take cover behind."

TM: Black will continue Singletrac's tradition of so-called "set-piece" interaction. Remember topping the Eiffel Tower in TM2? That's what we're talking about here. In TM: Black's carnival level, for instance, you'll find a ferris wheel you can blast off its stand and send rolling downhill to crush a suburban town—and any enemy cars who get in the way. You'll also find low-flying jet planes and helicopters you can knock from the sky and send crashing on your opponents. And each arena has its own level-specific traps and weapons too, kinda like the Lightning Bolt power-up in TM2.

The developers are designing the levels in such a way as to make it easier to find opponents and minimize what Campbell calls "separation anxiety." Levels will even expand as the battle wears on, but Sony and Incognito aren't quite ready to divulge how this process works yet. And in a throwback to the original Twisted Metal, health charge-ups are part of the level design—you'll need to find and park on health ramps to recharge your life meter.

But it's not just you who interacts with the environment in TM: Black—now the arenas get all up in your face, too. "We're going to have

several levels with real-time weather," Jaffe says, "and it totally affects visibility to the point where you're actually out driving and it's like in the middle of Seattle, pouring so hard you can barely see anything. And then the sun comes out and you can play with better visibility." In some levels you'll see time-of-day transitions, and remember those pedestrians who were so fun to flatten in TM1 and 2? They're back in TM: Black. But our favorite new addition here in terms of gameplay strategy and all-out destructive bliss is the traffic. Innocent cars, trucks and buses zip around particular parts of the levels, and you can do the obvious—and fun—thing and blast these Sunday drivers to the Stone Age. Or you can get crafty and use the traffic strategically. "Say you're racing down the freeway and an enemy shoots a missile at you," Jaffe explains. "You can pull in front of a bus, the missile slams into the bus and you avoid it."

TM: Black's control and basic weapons scheme will be familiar to the series' fans. As before, each car has a standard machine gun and its own special weapon. Sweet Tooth's special, for instance, transforms his vehicle into an ultra-powerful robot for a limited time. And, as you'd expect, various weapon pick-ups—homing missiles, dumb-fire rockets, etc.—litter the arenas. But that's where the similarities between TM: Black and its PlayStation prequels end. Building on the Street Fighter-style special moves of TM2, the developers have jazzed up the weapon systems to the point where TM: Black has become a whole new—and much deeper—car-combat title. "There are really two things we've done with the weapons to give the game a lot of oredepth and replay value," Jaffe says. "One is to create in the weapons the ability to inflict more damage based on the player's skill level, and the other is multifunctional ability with each weapon."

Let's explain this potential tenfold increase in gameplay depth with an example. We'll use the gas can, one of the game's basic weapon pick-ups. It looks like a barrel of fuel that slides out

The Twisted Metal series is getting a major facelift in TM: Black, but what makes the series' fifth installment worthy of such a dark moniker? Sony's Dave Jaffe explains, "Our inspiration is from films like *Seven* and *Silence of the Lambs*, which aren't really gory. They're psychologically disturbing." Environments in TMB won't be as outrageous (read: wacky) as in previous games but will instead take a disarmingly realistic approach. Garbage and debris whisk around dark, deserted streets in neighborhoods you'd probably not want to visit at night. The artwork strongly favors grays, browns and blacks over a formerly diverse pallet, so everything has a dingy, run-down appearance that sets the mood for the whole game. Characters have their own disturbing backstories—as told through movies and plot twists in the one-player game. Jaffe describes the whole TM: Black experience as "realism through the eyes of a sad, psychotic individual." Heck, if that doesn't pique the interest of all you non-psychos, we don't know what will.



Twisted Metal

3 & 4

What Went Wrong?

If you avoided 989 Studios' take on the car-combat genre, you didn't miss much. The Review Crew found TM3 to be "slow, sluggish and tedious," not to mention a bitch to control, and we were just plain bored by 4's "seriously stale" gameplay. Sales figures show you gamers felt the same. "In Twisted Metal 3 and 4 there clearly was a lack of tuning and gameplay testing," Sony's Dave Jaffe says, "simply because they didn't have a lot of time to make those games." Jaffe also finds fault with the games' weapons, saying they brought little new to the gameplay. "In fact, I don't think they were designed with gameplay in mind," he says. "They were probably designed with the idea of 'Hey, this sounds cool.'"

SCEA has learned from its mistakes. Not only is the original team back—it's getting more time to craft Black. Work began 19 months ago, and the game has already undergone extensive tuning. (By comparison, TM3 and 4 each spent only a year in development.) Better still, TM: Black's dark theme will give the series a fresh start on PS2. "We feel we're treading on new ground for this genre," says Jaffe, "which TM3 and 4 really didn't do. They gave you more of the same, but not as good."

TWISTED DATA

Units Sold:

TM 1.1 million

TM 2 1.8 million

TM 3 1.2 million

TM 4 465,000

SOURCE: NPD TRS'S VIDEO GAMES SERVICE



of your trunk and hangs off the rear of your vehicle until you hit the fire button, which lobbs the can forward in a high arc. Tap fire again and the can drops to the ground and detonates. Anyone within range of the fireball will take some damage. But if you manage to drop the can directly on an enemy, he'll suffer three times the damage and you'll get a special bull's-eye bonus. "The idea is that more experienced players who really get the feel and rhythm of the game will be able to time their attacks to the point where they can really do some major damage with that weapon," Jaffe explains. "Whereas your basic player can pick up the gas can and utilize it and do some damage, but he won't be able to use it as well as an experienced Twisted Metal player."

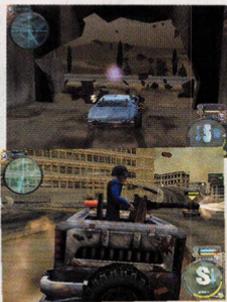
This added depth applies to nearly every weapon in the game, including character-specific special attacks: Take the sports-utility vehicle's special, for instance. Activate it and a guy rises out of the roof of your truck to man a machine-gun turret. He'll automatically track 360 degrees and fire upon any enemies who come close. So, you're sure to inflict some damage if you trigger this special when opponents are near. But if you want to unleash serious hurt, you'll need to maneuver your truck so enemies lie directly ahead of you. This way, you can cut loose with your standard front-mounted machine guns while your turret man bears down on the same target. Suddenly, you get a super version of your special. The point is, "there's more skill to the game if you want there to be," Jaffe says.

Meanwhile, in the defense department, Incognito is designing the weapons so there's a way to defend against each of them. If someone freezes you, for example, you no longer have to sit there and take your punishment. "You can release yourself quicker through a sequence of button presses," Campbell explains.

All that's only half of the story. Remember—Jaffe said each weapon now has multiple functions. Let's return to TM: Black's trusty gas can for another example. Aside from its basic function as a trajectory weapon, you can drop the can behind your car and it becomes a remote bomb like the one in TM2. Drop it, hit the fire button again and—BOOM!—enemies on your six have a bad day. But—and here's the

important part—if you drop the can and let it sit for more than two seconds, a little indicator begins to flash, meaning the can will do a lot more damage when you detonate it. What's the point? "This promotes trap setting," Jaffe explains. "If I set this thing around a corner that I know you always like to come to, I can sit back, wait for the increased damage logic to kick in, then detonate this super explosion when you show up. I can't just drop it and get lucky, because the can has to have sat there long enough to engage the higher damage logic. You have to plan to do these things. The game motivates you that way."

If all this talk of bull's-eye bonuses and weapon logic spins your noodle, don't worry—you can always just cut loose with the weapons' basic functions and have fun. But we figure TM: Black's added complexity is the kind of thing hardcore car-combat fans can't wait to tear into. We envision chat rooms and FAQs focusing on trap setting or the dozens of uses for the homing missile—and we haven't seen that kind of fervor around a car-combat game since the Twisted Metal series' heyday. But enough comparing TM: Black to its prequels. If the developers deliver everything they promise, this game will be so immersive, so deep and so dark it'll wipe away all those nasty TM3 memories for good. "Chasing an enemy through moving traffic during a violent rain storm, crashing through storefront windows while sideswiping the bad guys, blinding your opponent with your high beams while you launch a volley of homing missiles into his front windshield—all of these things we saw in our heads when we designed Twisted Metal 4 are actually becoming possible," Jaffe says, "thanks to this new technology." 🚗



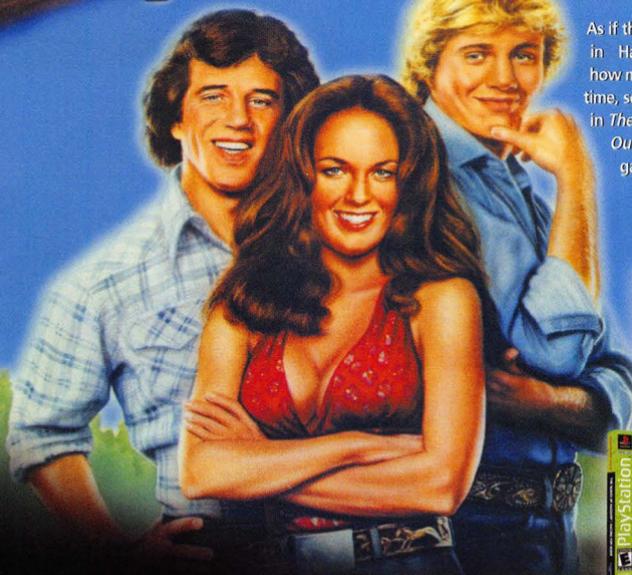
Yee Haw!

Reckon we got room in Hazzard for the whole Duke Family.

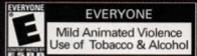


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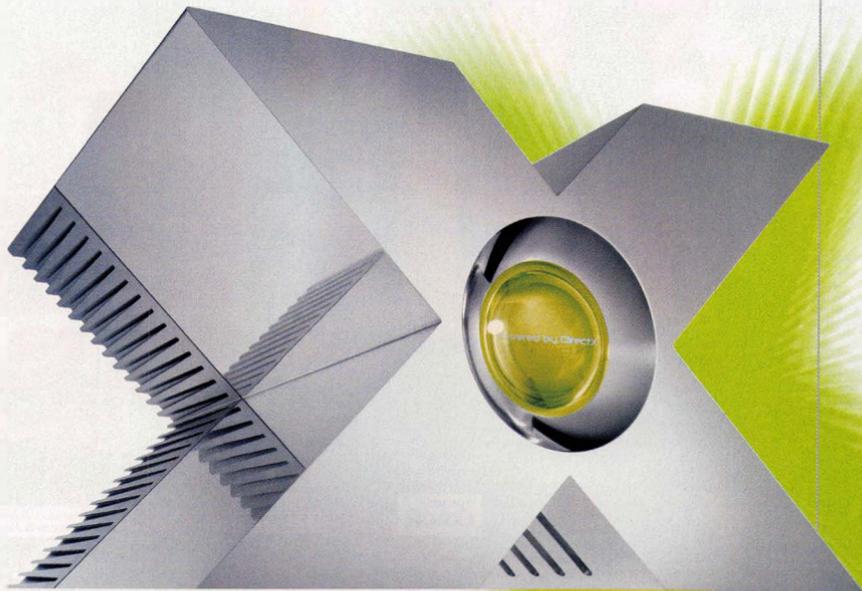
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XBOX: GAME CONSOLE

BY DAVID KUSHNER



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The carpets are rolled up. The boxes are packed. A life-size inflatable boxing doll wobbles in the hall. It's moving time for the staff behind Microsoft's upcoming video game console, the Xbox. Not long before my visit to mission control in Redmond, Wash., the team began relocating from the leafy nexus of the main Microsoft campus a few miles down the road to a nondescript office park nicknamed Area Xbox.

"My response used to be a whole bunch of crap," admits Seamus Blackley, director of Xbox Advanced Technology Team, when asked the low-end PC question. "[I used to talk] about how we get it, how Xbox is a console, but my new response is much simpler: I don't think Konami is too confused about it being a low-end PC. I don't think Midway or Infogrames or Capcom are too confused either." Blackley is holding court in an Area Xbox conference room fresh with new

OR PC-PORT MACHINE?

The PR guy showing me around this crisp fall day tells me the Xboxers are being moved so they can work in better isolation. In other words: set pressure cooker to On. The coming months, of course, promise what might be the greatest showdown in the short history of home video gaming. Nintendo's Gamecube, Sony's PlayStation 2 and Microsoft's Xbox are heading into the multi-billion-dollar Thunderdome. Four consoles enter! One console leaves! But while Nintendo and Sony are proven players, Microsoft, for a change of pace, is the newbie—not to mention the only American company maker in the mix. To make matters more complicated, the company is having to do a complete flip-flop—from software to hardware, personal computer to console. Talk about a makeover.

In this light, the Xbox team's move takes on a heady symbolism. Microsoft is having to distance itself from the very thing that made it a powerhouse: the PC. As the company well knows, console gamers are way different from computer gamers; they're younger, fiercer, playing the games on the big fat tube. And to survive this dogged marketplace, Microsoft has to establish street cred by every means necessary: forging alliances with established console game developers (especially in Japan), building hardware for thumb-busting play, and, most of all, making really cool games.

To do this, Microsoft has to answer the ultimate question, the one that's swirling inside every gamer's skull: Is the Xbox a legit console or just a low-end set-top PC?

Discuss.

carpet aroma. As a demo of impeccably engineered ping pong balls bounce across a TV screen behind him, Blackley drives home Microsoft's newest mantra: If you don't believe we're more than a PC-port machine, just look at the developers who are coming on board.

Not long before I visit, the company travelled to the Tokyo Game Show and announced that Konami was committed to bring Xbox some of its juiciest titles: Crash Bandicoot X, Jurassic Park X, Silent Hill X and Metal Gear Solid X. The games would be essentially the same as those appearing on other consoles, but would be tweaked to take advantage of Xbox's particular specs. Konami's announcement capped off a run of developer deals ranging from first-party relationships with established PC houses like Bungie (creators of Halo and Oni) and Lionhead (Black and White) to third-party deals with major publishers including Activision and Namco. Even Square is hinting that it will support Microsoft's machine.

Though all this developer news came nearly a half year after Bill Gates announced the Xbox at the Computer Game Developers Conference in March 1999, the Xbox execs tell me that they had been courting the all-important development community for at least a year prior. J. Allard, general manager for Xbox's platform and third parties, says the company wanted to get in at the ground level to learn what developers need. "The conversations were like, 'Microsoft wants to get into digital entertainment,'" Allard recalls. "We think game consoles are intriguing, you've been doing this for 20 years...tell us what works, what doesn't,



**MICROSOFT'S
J. ALLARD**

"WE WERE CONCERNED THAT PEOPLE WOULD ASSOCIATE MICROSOFT WITH WORK. WITH NINE-TO-FIVE, WITH BUSINESS..."

TALE OF THE TAPE: MORE THAN 150 COMPANIES HAVE SIGNED ON TO DELIVER XBOX GAMES—A FEW OF WHICH WE GLIMPSED ON VIDEO AT MICROSOFT'S SEPTEMBER PRESS CONFERENCE.



and how we can do it better."

From the beginning, Allard adds, he knew his company was going to be fighting against preconceptions that they were PC-centric. "We were concerned that people would associate Microsoft with work, with nine-to-five, with business," he says, "basically, with no fun at all." As it turns out, Allard's concerns were not that off the mark. Konami, which was clearly one of the key companies to get on board to bust the PC image, admits to having had at least some skepticism. "In the beginning," explains Chris Bergstresser, Konami's vice president of strategic planning, "a lot of publishers were of the same mindset; we're like, 'Show us that you're really serious and then we'll support you.'"

To prove its seriousness and lure publishers, Microsoft is deploying all guns: economic and technological. On the biz side, they're flexing the

An equally prominent lure, according to both the developers and Xbox team, continues to be the technology itself. Blackley is eager to evangelize how easy the Xbox is for developers, how they can use the same kind of tools they use on a PC, how they can take advantage of the Xbox's sheer brute force: its 3D audio support, its 64MB unified memory (nearly twice PlayStation 2), its 300 MHz custom-designed GPU (ditto). The simple message, says Blackley, is "we want to give power to the artist."

That's all well and good, but there's one part of the tech package that still tightens the intestines of console gamers: the hard drive, that harbinger of all things PC. Just the thought of it conjures up ugly images of unruly defrags and crippling system crashes. No problem, Blackley promises—the Xbox won't crash. Of course, the hard drive connotes something that could grate on console gamers about as much as a reboot: game patches that have to be

"YOU CAN'T JUST SLAP A PC GAME ON A CONSOLE. THERE'S A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SITTING SIX INCHES FROM A PC SCREEN AND SIX FEET FROM A TV SET."

—JEFF BROWN, ELECTRONIC ARTS

power of their all-mighty buck, including a half-billion-dollar marketing commitment. With that kind of cash, promises Ed Fries, vice president of game publishing and first-party guru, the Xbox launch is guaranteed to be, as he says, "a bigger deal than the launch of Windows 95." Publishers like that message. "Their marketing plan all but guarantees a strong position and good installed base," says Jeff Brown, spokesperson for Electronic Arts (which is likely to soon announce Xbox support).

Another big biz lure for the key console developers is to standardize licensing agreements and royalty rates (the percentage of revenues that publishers must split with Microsoft on each game). Though Microsoft won't reveal the exact numbers, Allard says that one of the early complaints of publishers and developers was the uneven mix of royalty rates. To avoid, as Allard puts it, "damaging the ecosystem," Microsoft offered a fixed royalty worldwide, though exceptions could be made, Allard adds, for hot titles offered as exclusive Xbox games.

downloaded and installed to fix bugs. No deal, Blackley is quick to add. "If a patch comes through in a game proposal," he says, "we send out the nuclear weapons."

A no-patches declaration puts the onus more on developers who, as a result, can't rely on fixing bugs after a game's release. And actually, the hard drive lets them create games that are even more suited for a console environment. Peter Molyneux, a legend in PC game development, is on board as a first-party Microsoft developer in large part because of the Xbox's brute power. "If they get the balance right," he says, "the hard drive enables us to produce a huge amount of more visual experiences." This could manifest itself, Blackley explains, by having, say, 500 cars in a race instead of 20, or seeing the sweaty sheen on the tip of a T-Rex's nose.

Between the technological muscle of the hard drive and biz strength of Microsoft's marketing and support plans, the company now has the stable of talent it needed from the start. But to ally the PC-port-machine concern, Microsoft

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MUNCH'S XBOX ODDYSEE

Need more proof that Xbox is a true game console? Just ask Oddworld Inhabitants, the guys behind the highly promising Munch's Oddysee for the PlayStation 2, which—surprise!—isn't really for the PS2 at all anymore. In a high-profile system shift, Oddworld Inhabitants pledged full support for Microsoft's machine in late October and abandoned PS2 development altogether. Munch's Oddysee will now be a launch title exclusively for the Xbox (Microsoft will publish the game), and the remaining installments in the series are Xbox bound, too.

Now that's not really surprising, given that Oddworld head Lorne Lanning has long been the development community's most vocal critic of Sony's system (he has come right out and said the PS2 is a "bitch" to work with). But what's more interesting is what Lanning has to say about Microsoft. It's a company that's not afraid to pursue new game experiences, he says. In other words, Microsoft is willing to take risks. "In the end, we can only build as good a game as we're being supported to build," Lanning tells us, "and Microsoft's passion for nurturing and supporting games that really push the edge is something that's extremely rare in today's industry. It's one thing to have someone paying for it, and it's another to have them really believing in it and encouraging it."

The Xbox incarnation of Munch's Oddysee will offer the same novel gameplay as the PS2 game, except with richer textures and a higher degree of activity from the game's population of beasties. But, more importantly for the focus of this feature, Munch's Oddysee is most definitely a game conceived for the consoles and yet another example of the type of content Microsoft wants on Xbox.

—Crispin Boyer



MICROSOFT KNOWS IT'S JAPANESE SUPPORT THAT'LL MAKE OR BREAK XBOX'S CONSOLE CRED, SO GAMES LIKE SILENT HILL X ARE KEY.

must tackle two other formidable obstacles: how to ensure that publishers won't just shovel PC ports on to the system and, more importantly, how will they guarantee that developers make enough traditional-style console games at all.

Because the Xbox is so PC-friendly, developers can essentially rely on the same tools they use to develop PC games instead of having to buy a custom development kit. It's almost a no-brainer for a big publisher like Electronic Arts or Activision to simply shovel their existing titles onto this new platform. Easy money, no? "We haven't ruled out ports of existing titles," says Kathy Vrabeck, executive vice president of global brand management and worldwide publishing for Activision. Though she can't confirm specific titles in Xbox development, she suggests that sports/action-oriented blockbusters like Tony Hawk's Pro Skater and Shawn Palmer Snowboarding would make natural Xbox games (nudge nudge, wink wink).

Other publishers also see the perks of porting current console hits. "Our priority is for ports," says EA's Brown. "When we think about content, the first thing that comes to mind is making popular titles available on Xbox. That's a good business model. Second, people who buy new consoles want to know they'll get the software that's getting the buzz." However, Brown adds, "You can't just slap a PC game on a console. There's a big difference between sitting six inches from a PC screen and six feet from a TV set."

Will gamers be seeing (eek!) Who Wants to Be an Xbox Millionaire or plies of quick-and-

easy PC ports? The final answer is: Don't bet on it. "Microsoft has made it crystal-clear that they're going after hardcore gamers [who want] new content," reveals Vrabeck. Or, as Kevin Bachus, director of Xbox third party, puts it simply: "There will be no PC ports." What that means is that Xbox developers are already being expected to make traditional console style games: sports, action, racing, fighting. Thing is, some of the most notable first-party developers, like Bungie and Lionhead, come from a traditional PC background. Sure these guys are talented, but who's to say they can churn out the kinds of games that console players crave?

"It's a very, very different ball game," Molyneux admits. With PC games, he says, it's easier to expect a player to sit in front of the computer for hours and hours and hours, whereas with console games, players are more likely to spend shorter periods of time in front of the TV screen. As a result, he says, console games have to be developed in a much more accessible and action-oriented fashion. "A game can't be abstract," he says.

In the end, the games will be about quality, not quantity, the Xbox team says. The bad news is that there's no way to guarantee that even companies like Konami and Capcom will deliver the amount of games that players want. Just look at how few titles Konami produced for the Nintendo 64 after announcing it had signed on to that system. Microsoft is doing its best, though, to keep the relationships flowing. One big step is to build an arm of the team in Japan. There are no plans to, say, buy a Japanese developer outright, but there are plans to continue the pattern of relationships that have been started. And how console is that?

After a long day in Area Xbox, it's hard not to feel like Microsoft's console is actually a console after all. Maybe it really doesn't matter what a company's roots are in the end. Just consider how a corporation that made stereos (read: Sony) became such a video game colossus. Ultimately, though, the real test isn't the hardware, the development kits, or the developers. It's the fun. And, for now, Microsoft is keeping a tight lid on the products it hopes will be the most fun of all. The lid is so tight, in fact, that the PR escort is quick to shut the doors of offices where actual development talk is taking place. So it goes, I figure, as I head out the lobby door. The opening ceremonies are over. Let the games begin. 🎮

THE EGM SLICK

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Each year, we see a number of significant innovations that truly change the way we think about video games and the game industry. These trendsetters can involve anything from the rise in power of a particular developer or publisher, the acceptance of a new technology, the dawning of an entirely new concept or even the actions of an individual. And each year, as we look back, it's possible to pinpoint the slickest, most important events and elements in video gaming.

That's where the EGM Slick 50 comes in. Now in its third year, this annual feature jumps the gun, just a little, by laying out our own set

of predictions for what will be big in the vid-game community between now and the close of 2001. We figure all of the developers, gadgets, games and gameplay concepts highlighted in the next 20 pages will be significant enough to change the face of both the industry itself and how we're likely to interact with it.

Of course, we could be wrong, but we have a pretty good track record so far (check out the sidebar on last year's Slick 50 and see for yourself). And even if the stuff listed here doesn't end up reshaping our gaming world, we know that, at the very least, these people, hardware, concepts and software are going to be ultra slick in 2K1.

People • Hardware • Concepts • Software

Harry Potter EA's Goblet of Cash

If anything can break Pokémon's stranglehold on kiddie-culture, it's Harry Potter, the 14-year-old wizard-in-training who's become the biggest license in video games faster than you can say Voldemort. He-Who-Cannot-Be-Named. Electronic Arts snagged the rights to make games based on all of author J.K. Rowling's bestselling Harry Potter novels last August, and EA's new studio in Chertsey, England, will produce Potter games for all the systems, including the handhelds. EA has yet to announce anything in particular (expect those announcements in early 2001), but a game based on the wizarding sport of Quidditch—sorta like rugby played on flying broomsticks—is a safe bet. Rumor has it EA is working on a massively multiplayer game set in Potter's world, too. The Chertsey studio is working closely with Rowling

to make sure the games stay true to her novels. They're also collaborating with Christopher Columbus, who's directing the Harry Potter flick due late next year.

If you're not wild about Harry yet, put down your joypad and read the four books out now. They're only the most entertaining fantasy novels—filled with twist endings, great good guys and really nasty bad guys—since that Tolkien dude wrote about Bilbo and his pals. And before you know it, Potter merchandise is going to be everywhere. You won't be able to escape it. You might as well join the legions of muggles who've dived into the Potter craze, especially since it ain't gonna fade for a while—Rowling has three more books planned. "It's definitely going to be a very, very strong franchise," said Reyne Rice, director of the NPD group's Toys Services Division. "The books are fabulous, exciting and full of fantasy. You can just see how sequels will keep folding from this, so kids will continue to grow with it."

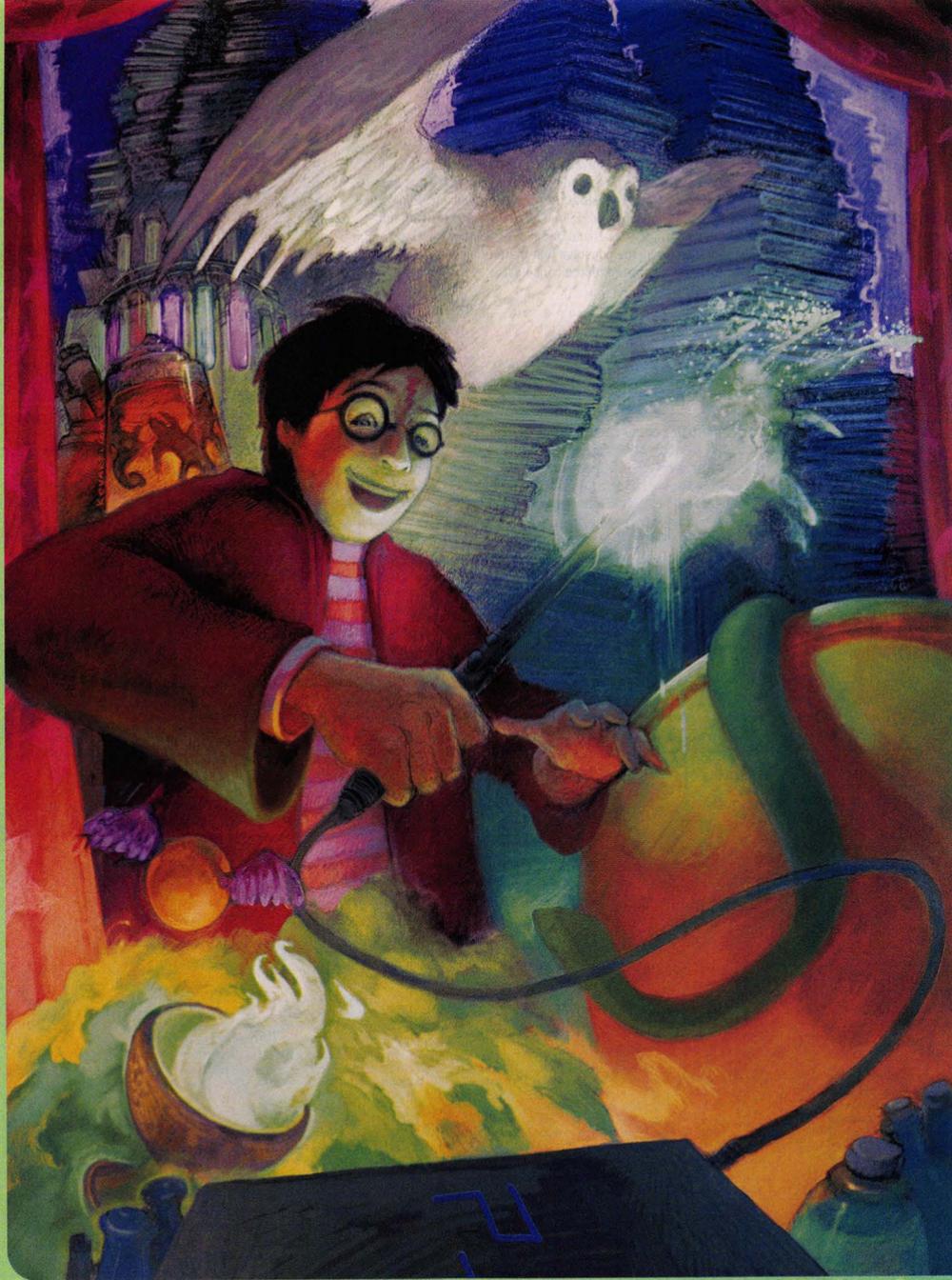


ILLUSTRATION BY KEVIN LLEWELLYN

Epic Games The Unreal Deal

North Carolina-based developer Epic Games—the gang behind the PC hits Unreal and Unreal Tournament—have become household names among computer gamers, but why should console players care? Their less-than-perfect PlayStation 2 port of UT notwithstanding, Epic's role as a Sony middleware partner means you're going to see their logo pop up in more games than you'd expect next year. "The Unreal engine is going to have a big impact on console games," Epic vice president Mark Reign told us. "Our licensees, including some of the biggest names in the game business, are also doing PS2 and Xbox titles with our technology." Epic has just announced they're a tool and middleware vendor for Xbox. And it's a safe bet that Epic will develop titles for all the consoles that matter next year, too. Give these guys a chance—they're just getting started on the consoles.



Angelina Jolie Lara in the Flesh

It's a safe bet that actor Bob Hoskins doesn't pop into your noggin when you think of Mario. And we doubt M. Bison conjures images of Raul Julia. But—trust us—you'll never picture Lara Croft as anyone but Angelina Jolie after you see this year's Tomb Raider flick. "She's the only person I ever thought could pull it off," said Simon West, the movie's director. "Anybody who knows Lara has very strong impressions of what she looks like. She's this gorgeous, voluptuous, ideal woman, so I wasn't going to go against that. But on the other hand, I wanted an intelligent personality, and she also has that slight dark side."

Back when speculation first began over who would fill Lara's lycra shirt on the big screen, few folks even thought of Jolie, who often plays somber parts and recently won an Oscar for her role in *Girl, Interrupted*. Instead, fans tossed around names like Sandra Bullock and Elizabeth Hurley. Adrian Smith, Core Design's development director, originally envisioned Jennifer Lopez for the role. But now that we've been to the set and seen Jolie in action—and heard her spot-on accent—her casting makes perfect sense. And not just to us. "It's funny, I thought [the role] was really, really far from what I'm used to, but it's not," Jolie said. "The essence

of her is very similar to all the other characters I've played—the essence of somebody who's kind of alone, is focused on justice or setting things right, is kind of a little insane."

As she seemingly does with all her films, Jolie dove headfirst into this newest role—literally. She trained in gymnastics to prepare for dozens of wire-assisted stunts. Chances are when you see Lara bungee jumping or flipping or fighting in the film, that's Jolie herself doing the dirty work. "She's probably the gutsiest actress I ever worked with," said special-effects supervisor Chris Corbould, who previously worked on the last three Bond films. "She just goes for it. If it's a wide shot, it's not just a stunt person. You can see her face. She makes our stuff look so good, like it's right out of the game, really."

Jolie freely admits that she's terrible at the Tomb Raider games ("I kill [Lara] constantly," she said), and she also acknowledges that this big-explosion summer-movie stuff is brand-new business to her, too. But she's deep into the role now, she's signed up for two sequels, and we really can't think of a slicker actress to bring Lady Croft to life. "I kept thinking I can't do this," Jolie said. "I'm a serious actor. And then suddenly I was in my little outfit on top of a mountain in Iceland, with some dogs pulling me in a sled, with some guns attached to me, and I thought, 'Yeah, this is exactly who I am!'"

SLICK
MO



ILLUSTRATION BY SHAWN BARBER

Games for grown-ups For Mature Eyes Only

Finally, we're seeing mainstream acceptance of games as more than just kid's stuff. Need proof? Look at Nintendo. Who would have thought the one-time king of kiddie games is now releasing titles crammed with bloody headshots and cartoon animals who swig whiskey. A trend that kicked off with 1998's *Metal Gear Solid*, Mature-rated console gaming is going to be watched by everybody in 2001, when Conker's *Bad Fur Day* and Eidos' babelicious *Fear Effect 2: Retro Helix* get our juices flowing—and no doubt draw the ire of parents and politicians. But hey, games geared for us grown-ups are long overdue—and they're good business, too. "Half the market is under 18 and half is over," said George Harrison,



Nintendo of America's president of marketing and corporate communications. "We decided that we cannot afford to compete in only half the market."



gamecube More Than Just a Toy This Time

SLICK
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Remember a time when it didn't matter if you could use your game system to get online and order a soda from a pop machine in Scandinavia? When games were games and gameplay mattered over everything? Gamecube, coming to Japan in July and the U.S. in October, looks like a game machine, not stereo equipment. Nintendo has committed itself to making this a true gamer's machine (and with *Mario*, *Metroid* and *Zelda* on the way, you can't go wrong, right?). Yes it'll have the modem/broadband connectivity that the other guys do, and Nintendo says the system will be flexible enough that developers will have no problem creating games. "In my experience, there have often been theoretical claims of high performance for game hardware, and although people were very impressed by the figures, the actual products haven't even delivered one-tenth of the claims," Nintendo game designer Shigeru Miyamoto said. "It is a given that the Nintendo Gamecube will offer better graphics and higher quality sound, but more importantly it will allow developers the freedom to concentrate on creativity without worrying about technical limitations." There's no question Gamecube will be impressive. But will it be impressive enough to put up a fight against Xbox, which launches around the same time this fall, not to mention the PS2 and DC? We hope so.



TONY HAWK This Bird Man Made Extreme Games Fly

Although they started out as a novelty (remember Sony's ESPN Xtreme Games?), extreme-style sports games have blossomed into a full-blown genre. But it wasn't until Tony Hawk and developer Neversoft teamed up to create the most dominant skateboarding game to date that extreme games truly gained mainstream popularity. "I am honored to be taken as an example for other sports," said Hawk of his status as spokesperson for extreme competition. "I'm just glad to see 'alternative/action sports' athletes finally getting some recognition." But now that THPS clones are everywhere and the genre is brimming with new titles, is the future bright for extreme games? "I think it'll keep getting better as the platforms improve," Hawk said. "Skateboarding continues to progress, so the games will obviously follow the same pattern." At the very least, we can expect to see Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 sometime (hopefully) within the next year and a half.

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GMV screen shots are from the Sega Dreamcast game console.



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keiji inafune More Than Just Mega Man

He's the father of Capcom's blue bomber (Mega Man), his favorite movie is Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai*, and he can sometimes be found posing in battle gear in Japanese *Guns & Ammo*-style magazines. Keiji Inafune is his name, and you can add him to the list of Capcom's ace designers (a list that includes the names Okamoto and Mikami). Aside from his involvement in the Mega Man series, Inafune's *Onimusha*—one of the more promising PS2 titles we've seen—will no doubt help to quench the thirst of new PS2 owners in the first half of 2001. Originally a PS one game, it was converted to PS2 when Inafune and his team got their hands on the new hardware. "As a developer, when I get better hardware I want to develop for it right away," he told us. *Onimusha* is set in a historically accurate time period of Japanese feudal lord Nobunaga, but the game overlays a fictional story on top. Add in samurai swordplay with a touch of survival horror action, and that's what PS2 players have to look forward to.

retro studios Making Metroid in America

Don't let their moniker fool you into thinking there's nothing state-of-the-art going on behind Retro's doors. This Nintendo-funded development group has quietly been working on a slew of Gamecube titles for the past year. The company name references old games that used pure gameplay—not—glitz to make them fun, but Retro realizes that everyone likes a cutting-edge game as well. Right now, Retro admits they're working on a football game, a basketball game, an RPG and even *Metroid*. If they deliver on what they promise, Nintendo's new kid on the block could give its older sibling Rare a run for its money.



The 2000 slick 50

For you picky readers keeping score at home, here's the Slick 50 that appeared a year ago in our January 2000 issue. Did our picks pan out? Let's have a look-see...

OK, so maybe we got a little ahead of ourselves with a few of last year's Slick 50 choices—particularly our entry on Wireless Gaming. Sure, being able to download Game Boy games for your cell phone is a nifty concept, but we reckon cellular gaming is really going to hit its stride in 2001. Trust us—the idea of a handheld gaming device will take on a whole new meaning by the middle of the year, and you'll never look at your cell phone the same way again. We were jumping the gun a bit on the Final Fantasy flick, too, as well as Paper Mario and The Bouncer, since we won't be seeing these things until 2001.

Movie hype and Mario delays aside, we hit the Koopa right on the shell for pretty much everything else on last year's list. You can't flip through 50 pages of our Previews section now without seeing a game that boasts cel-shaded graphics. Co-op play has become a hyped feature in blockbuster games like *Perfect Dark*, *TimeSplitters* and the upcoming *Phantasy Star Online*—which you'll actually need to play cooperatively to complete. Developer Neversoft proved they're much more than a one-hit wonder with Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 and Spider-Man. And Visual Concepts defeated the mighty Madden with their NFL 2K1.

Of course, a lot of stuff in the 2000 Slick 50 is still slick this year and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future. Emulation is once again a hot-button topic, now that Bleemcast's launch is looming. Microsoft and Nintendo are preparing the two most exciting consoles ever (well, three if you count the Game Boy Advance). Online console gaming has finally gotten the big-bang debut it deserves, courtesy of SegaNet. Heck, we could have just taken half of last year's list and run it again this year. Maybe we should change this annual feature's name to the Slick 100.

Joanna Dark

Resident Evil Code: Veronica

New Uses for Handhelds

Nintendo Dolphin

Co-op Play

The PlayStation 2

Yoshiki Okamoto

The VMU

Treasure

AT&T

DVD

Music Games

Namco

Cel-Shaded Visuals

MSR

Pokémon Gold and Silver

Hammerhead

Paper Mario

Realism

Team Calibur

Pokémon Card Game

Skies of Arcadia

The Dreamcast

Neversoft

Erik Kraber

Controller-Specific Games

Game Customization

Bioware

Visual Concepts

Consultants

Marigul

Surround Sound

Ryo Hazuki

The Bouncer

Redneck Games

The Final Fantasy Movie

Online Gaming

Broad Bandwidth

Enix

Mobile 21

Ulala

Sonic Team

Emulation

OpenGL

Xbox

Microsoft

Sonic

Wireless Gaming

Yutaka Saito

Crazy Taxi

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TODD
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GAME BOY ADVANCE Nintendo's Handheld Finally Grows Up

It's invaded our homes, our minivans, even our schools. Most kids love it. Most parents hate it. It's the Game Boy, and with more than 100 million units sold worldwide, it's the most successful video-game console ever. But it's also 11 years old and really starting to show its age. Finally, Nintendo has revealed its successor and the heir apparent to the huge portable market, the Game Boy Advance, due out this July. What's to love about the GBA? Let us count the ways: one, it's roughly as powerful as the Super NES, so 16-bit classics can be ported with ease (Mario Kart and F-Zero are already on the way). Two: it's backward compatible with all Game Boy and Game Boy Color games. Three: it's got a low price (about \$90 based on the Japanese price), and nice battery life (15 hours on two AAs). Finally, four: only one cart required for multiplayer link-up games (finally!). Add all those up and it's a safe bet that you are looking at the next big thing in portable gaming.



SLICK
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PlayOnline Square's Master Plan

It may be little more than a fancy homepage for Square now, but PlayOnline (www.playonline.com) will evolve into something revolutionary next year. Started last January by Square in Japan, PlayOnline is a portal site that, at first, will offer online strategies for all of Square's games. In fact, the only place you can find an official walk-through for Final Fantasy IX in Japan is on PlayOnline.

But starting with Final Fantasy X for the PlayStation 2 and PC, players will be able to log onto PlayOnline during their adventure and

PlayOnline.com

dig up hints—and even participate in online auctions for rare items. Stuck in a cave? Don't know which town to visit next? Select the "PlayOnline" option in the game's menu and you'll find all the help you need. Final Fantasy XI will be the first game in the series to offer

networked play with other players, and PlayOnline will expand again to support that function. Eventually, Square wants PlayOnline to evolve into more than just a homepage, a strategy site and a hub for its online servers; it wants it to become a full-fledged entertainment site that offers downloadable tunes, news, chat rooms—plenty of stuff for gamers and non-gamers alike. PlayOnline in Japan will blossom first, but the American version of the site will follow suit shortly after.

Defenders of the Industry Standing Up to the Man

The game industry has been attacked from all sides over the past year—from litigious parents; from chain stores cracking down on the sales of M-rated games; and from the Federal Trade Commission, whose recent report claims game companies are purposely marketing M-rated products to kids. We're just happy to have a few folks who stand up for us. More specifically, we're glad that Doug Lowenstein, president of the Interactive Digital Software Association, and Sega's Peter Moore went to bat for the industry at the recent Senate Commerce Committee meetings on the FTC study. Both men pointed out obvious flaws with the FTC's report. Whether the senators paid attention remains to be seen, but at least we know we have men in Washington fighting the good fight for our favorite hobby.



Incognito Singletrac 2.0

"The Background of this team includes over five years of PlayStation game development experience that produced five titles," Scott Campbell, president of Salt Lake City-based developer Incognito Studios, told us, "and now we have over one year of PlayStation 2 development under our belts." Right, so how come you've never heard of these guys before? Turns out Incognito, formed in spring '99, is a reincarnation of Singletrac, the developer that brought us the first two Twisted Metal games (with SCEA's help), Warhawk, Jet Moto, Rogue Trip and other PlayStation hits. Out of Incognito's 32 employees, 19 are former Singletrac staff, and now Incognito is working on the highly anticipated fifth installment in the Twisted Metal franchise—Twisted Metal: Black—as well as a second still-secret PS2 title. "Let me say I saw [this game] last week and it's freaking amazing!" said Dave Jaffe, director and lead designer of Twisted Metal 1, 2 and Black at Sony's Santa Monica studio. "I had the same kind of 'Wow, what a great fantasy!' feel that I got when I played the first Twisted Metal demo back in 1994."

We're hoping this secret project is a follow-up to Warhawk, but all Campbell will say is it's "in the action genre and involves combat."

PlayStation®2

Q-Ball

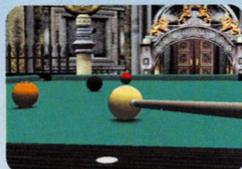
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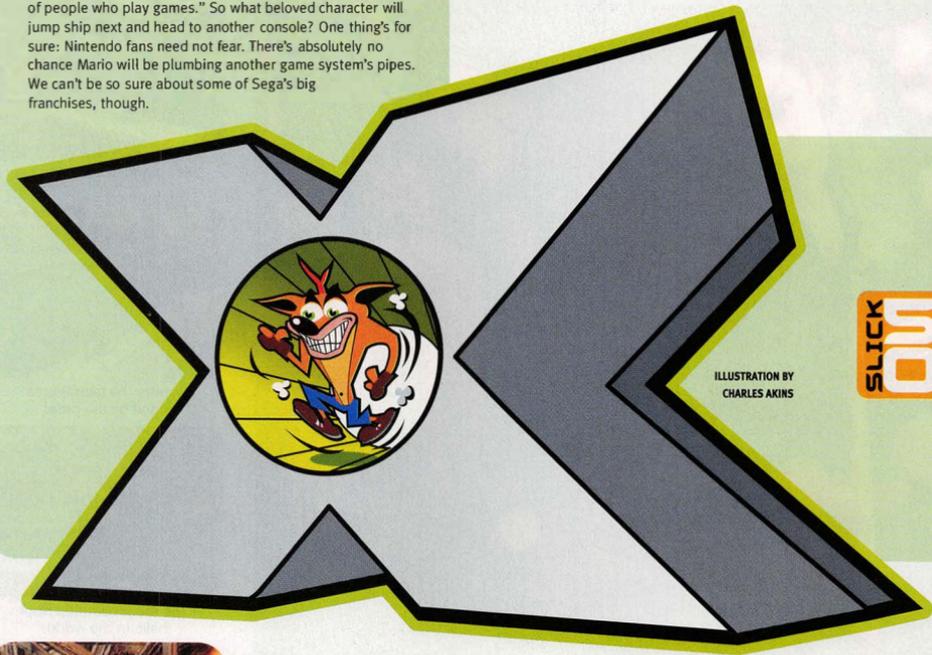
Franchise defections Kiss Your Crash Goodbye

Gone are the days of loyal mascots and games exclusive to one system, apparently. The massive success of the PlayStation hasn't stopped some of its most prominent stars from seeking other pastures. Two Sony icons are already packing their bags: Spyro the Dragon, and, surprisingly enough, Crash Bandicoot. Labeled as "disposable" by Sony and owned by Universal Interactive, both game franchises will be headed for Xbox, and who knows what other console they may pop up on next. Sony doesn't seem concerned. "We never actually appointed Crash or any other character as our mascot," said Shuhei Yoshida, vice president of product development at SCEA. "The market is becoming more and more diversified. We're going into a very fragmented market. Any one game or character cannot appeal to the broad range of people who play games." So what beloved character will jump ship next and head to another console? One thing's for sure: Nintendo fans need not fear. There's absolutely no chance Mario will be plumbing another game system's pipes. We can't be so sure about some of Sega's big franchises, though.

conker

This Squirrel's Got Big Nuts

Mark March 5, 2001, on your calendar, because that's when Conker's Bad Fur day hits stores and shatters Nintendo's squeaky-clean image forever. Rare, Nintendo's crown-jewel first-party developer, really wanted to cut loose with an M-rated game. They chose Conker the squirrel to be the cursing, whiskey-swiggling, flatulating, urinating star in a title that promises to make South Park look like a kindergarten play. And while we're swearing like drunken sailors in anticipation, we can't help but wonder if clueless parents are gonna pee their pants the first time Conker swears in front of their kids. After all, Conker's Pocket Tales on the Game Boy was wholesome kid's stuff, and Nintendo has its work cut out to give the little squirrel a 17-or-older spin. "Certainly the marketing outreach that we do will be heavily targeted toward people 18 and up, like we did with Perfect Dark," said George Harrison, Nintendo of America's president of marketing and corporate communications.



samus aran The Original Game Girl Returns

Move over Joanna Dark—Nintendo's finally bringing its oldest heroine back into the spotlight on Gamecube. Metroid has yet to disappoint, with two phenomenal home console titles and a decent Game Boy effort in the handheld's early days. But it's been a looong time since Samus suited up in her orange armor. Though starving for a new Metroid title on the N64, many gamers realized that the Samus hiatus was probably a blessing in disguise after playing less-than-spectacular 3D incarnations of formerly 2D classics like Konami's Castlevania and Contra. The Gamecube should give developer Retro Studios all the power they need to do the gal justice. After all, anyone who's seen the short Gamecube clip of Samus in action is probably still nursing a bruised chin from the jaw-drop. We expect to see the veteran vixen hit Nintendo's new system in the next year or so.

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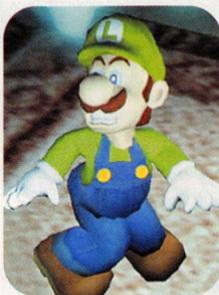
EUROCOM From Bond to Bandicoots

Trek to Derbyshire, England—just north of developer Rare's plush offices and south of Core Design—and you'll find Eurocom, the hardest-working company in the biz. "I actually don't know exactly how

many games we've developed," said Hugh Binns, company director and co-owner of Eurocom, which formed in 1988. "At a guess, it would be somewhere in the region of 40 to 50 going back to the 8-Bit NES. We've kept quite a low profile in the industry and prefer to let the games speak for themselves." Right now, the game that's speaking loudest is *The World is Not Enough* on Nintendo 64. Eurocom—which also just wrapped up *Crash Bash* on the PlayStation and is working on several next-gen projects with Electronic Arts—took on a colossal challenge when they set about making what many saw as the real sequel to Rare's *GoldenEye 007*. Turns out *TWINE* is one of the year's best N64 games and a more than worthy follow-up. And we expect Eurocom's street cred is only going to rise, considering how devoted these guys are to their projects. "Even the wrap party for *TWINE* had everyone dressed in tuxedos enjoying Vodka Martinis," Binns said. "Shaken, not stirred, of course."

Really Real-time Games Real-Time Isn't Just for Graphics Anymore

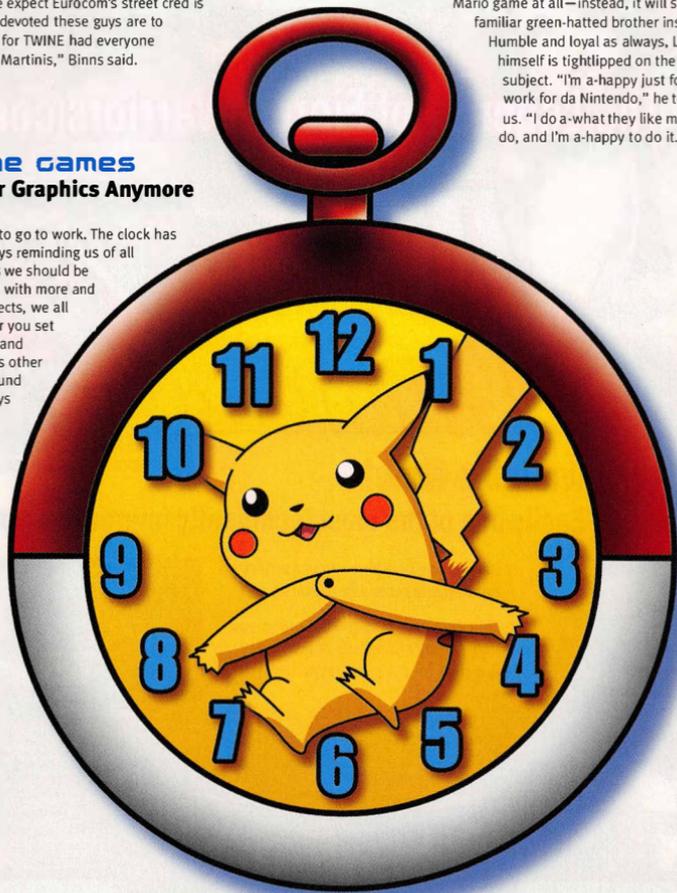
Time for bed. Time for school. Time to go to work. The clock has never been the gamer's friend, always reminding us of all the unpleasant little responsibilities we should be doing instead of playing games. But with more and more games incorporating time aspects, we all better start watching the clock. After you set the time and date in *Pokémon Gold* and *Silver*, some of the little critters, plus other contests and people, can only be found at specific times. *Majora's Mask* plays further with the time feature introduced by the last N64 *Zelda* game, forcing the player to play through three days over and over, with events only happening at certain times. Seaman checks the Dreamcast's internal clock to make sure you've been feeding your virtual friend often enough, plus has tailored messages on your birthday and other special dates. Even MSR keeps track of the time of day. So if you want to continue playing the latest games, our advice is to find a nice watch and start wearing it.



Luigi Primed to Finally Grab his Star

Despite debuting with equal billing to his sibling in the original *Mario Bros.*, Luigi soon found himself relegated to secondary character status, with others such as Toad and Princess Peach,

while Mario gained worldwide fame and fortune. But that may change soon. As the star of the first and longest Gamecube demo Nintendo has released, speculation is strong that the next Mario game won't be a Mario game at all—instead, it will star a familiar green-hatted brother instead. Humble and loyal as always, Luigi himself is tightlipped on the subject. "I'm a-happy just for to work for da Nintendo," he told us. "I do a-what they like me to do, and I'm a-happy to do it."

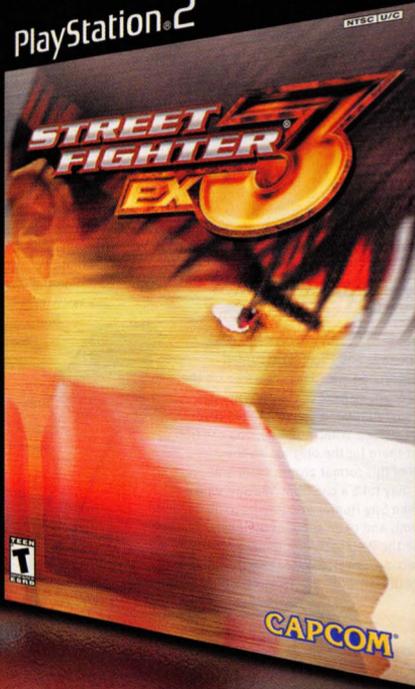




PlayStation 2



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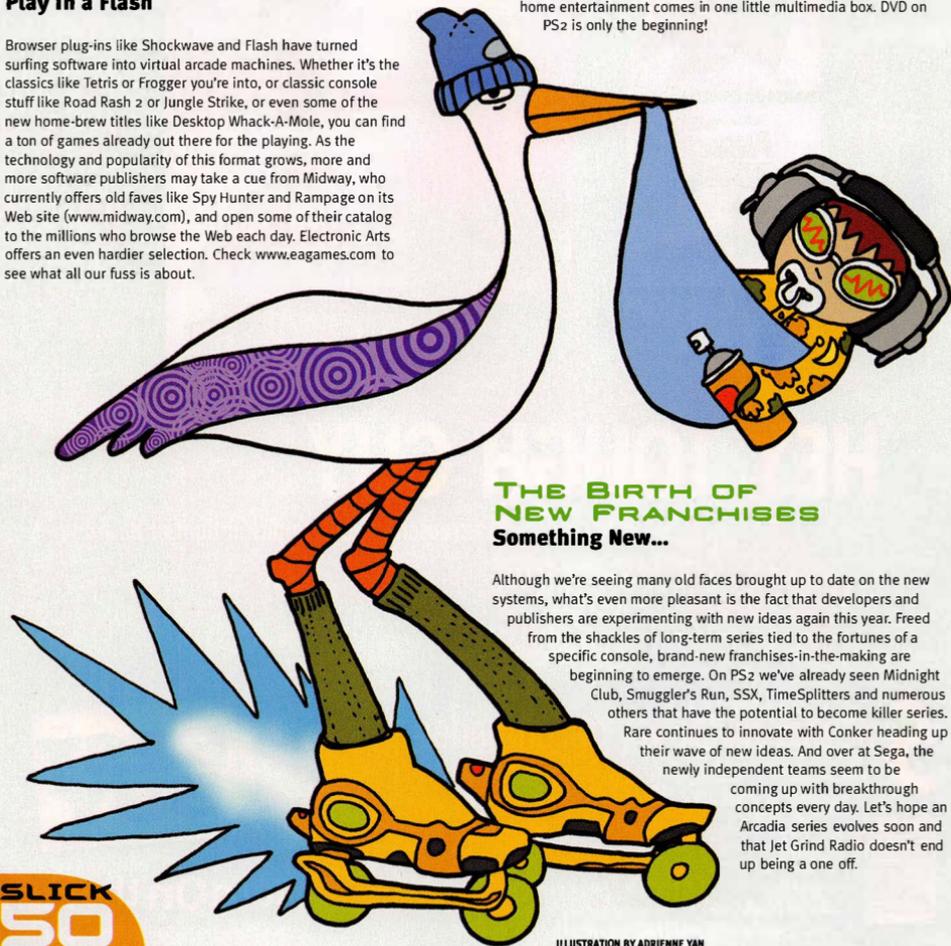
MP3 Hits the Consoles Thinking Outside the Box

Now that MP3 has established itself as the most portable, most easily distributed digital audio format, console and peripheral developers are starting to pick up on the medium's potential for use with next-generation consoles. First up, Sega plans to release a cable in March that'll let you connect any store-bought MP3 player to your DC's controller ports. Then you can use the included software to rip tracks from CDs or download MP3s from the Net. And connecting a player will be even easier on the PlayStation 2 and Xbox, since both systems have the necessary USB ports. It won't be long before all your high-quality home entertainment comes in one little multimedia box. DVD on PS2 is only the beginning!



Browser Games Play In a Flash

Browser plug-ins like Shockwave and Flash have turned surfing software into virtual arcade machines. Whether it's the classics like Tetris or Frogger you're into, or classic console stuff like Road Rash 2 or Jungle Strike, or even some of the new home-brew titles like Desktop Whack-A-Mole, you can find a ton of games already out there for the playing. As the technology and popularity of this format grows, more and more software publishers may take a cue from Midway, who currently offers old faves like Spy Hunter and Rampage on its Web site (www.midway.com), and open some of their catalog to the millions who browse the Web each day. Electronic Arts offers an even harder selection. Check www.eagames.com to see what all our fuss is about.



THE BIRTH OF NEW FRANCHISES Something New...

Although we're seeing many old faces brought up to date on the new systems, what's even more pleasant is the fact that developers and publishers are experimenting with new ideas again this year. Freed from the shackles of long-term series tied to the fortunes of a specific console, brand-new franchises-in-the-making are beginning to emerge. On PS2 we've already seen Midnight Club, Smuggler's Run, SSX, TimeSplitters and numerous others that have the potential to become killer series. Rare continues to innovate with Conker heading up their wave of new ideas. And over at Sega, the newly independent teams seem to be coming up with breakthrough concepts every day. Let's hope an Arcadia series evolves soon and that Jet Grind Radio doesn't end up being a one off.

ILLUSTRATION BY ADRIENNE YAN



new life for old franchises ...Something Old

It seems that several familiar games franchises are undergoing something of a renaissance. While many series have been stagnating on PS one and other systems, the new generation of consoles is allowing developers to express themselves further and bring these old familiar faces up to date. Aside from the PlayStation franchise highlighted in our cover story, you should also watch out for a reinvigorated Wipeout, Tomb Raider and Ninja Gaiden on the PS2, not to mention ToeJam & Earl on Dreamcast. Of course, when Gamecube arrives, we'll get the game everyone keeps asking for—Retro Studios' new Metroid title. Finally.

The ESRB Ranting and Rating

With outraged parents beating down doors in Washington for a quick-fix solution to adolescent-related ills without the hassles of actual parenting, we'll no doubt be seeing these guys around for a good while. Extending its reach most recently to online games, the board has sampled and rated several thousand games with one of its six age-sensitive categories since its 1994 inception. Given the growing presence and success of more controversial titles, we can expect age ratings and marketing restrictions to be a huge part of the upcoming year in gaming.



SLICK
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episodic games Piece by Piece by Piece

Astute readers will remember that we highlighted episodic content in our very first Slick 50 feature, back when Capcom was reworking *El Dorado Gate*, an episodic game that's hitting Japanese stores one chapter at a time. But now we're focusing on a new-and-improved publishing model that some hail as the future of game distribution—and this model doesn't involve stores at all. Instead, you download and pay for games in installments. "Anyone with access to the Internet can play a game much like you watch your favorite TV program—in episodes," said industry veteran Jim Perkins, president of Web Corp, which plans to publish episodic games for the PC, PlayStation 2, Xbox and even PDAs and cell phones. "If you like one episode, then you can download and play the next. Our try-before-you-buy model lets consumers avoid spending \$40 for a game that disappoints them."

Sounds good to us. And it's not just Web Corp—which currently has eight episodic series in production—that's getting in on the act. Core Design wants to turn *Tomb Raider* into an episodic franchise, too. Although the main chapters in *Lara Croft's* next-gen escapades will still be sold in stores, Core plans to release side-story episodes in downloadable format. Expect episodic content to hit high gear late next year, when Xbox launches and Sony releases the PS2 hard drive.

sega.net Online Ignition



Now that SegaNet has finally gone live, more than 100,000 people have put their faith in online gaming and signed up for the revolutionary network. Initially populated by the hordes of NFL 2K1 fans, *Quake III* and *NBA 2K1*: will most likely spawn an even bigger wave of enlistees. Sega reports that members log on for an average of two hours per day and, for the most part, experience good connections with few disruptions. Will the pioneering network be enough to save the Dreamcast long-term? That's a tough call, especially now that Sony has unleashed the PS2 here in the States. But if the recent crop of impressive games are any indication, it'll have a long (by system standards) and happy life.

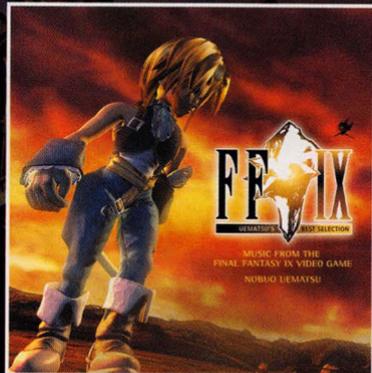
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SSX Finally, a Reason to Love Canada

EA Canada's reputation has been a little questionable lately, but with the release of *SSX* that's all changed. The developer from the Great White North literally came out of nowhere with the biggest surprise hit of the media circus that was the PlayStation 2 launch. Talk about a super way to revitalize a flagging image and a dying genre. Sure, it's not the most realistic snowboarding title, but that's what makes it great. The visual feast and over-the-top moves make *SSX* the perfect showpiece for your shiny new PS2. And anyone who can make us interested, much less addicted, to a snowboarding video game certainly deserves kudos.



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ILLUSTRATION BY GEOFFREY ZIPOLI

New directions in system design Consoles Get a Facelift

The aesthetic design of a game system is always a tell-tale sign of how a company wants its hardware to be perceived by the public. Sony's decision to release the original PlayStation in a slim grey casing similar to Nintendo's most successful consoles sent the message that the PS one is not a multimedia machine (like 3DO); it's a game system. So what does the PS2—with its vertical stand, motorized DVD tray, and jet-black shell—say to consumers? It says, "Don't leave me in the kid's playroom. I'm supposed to be in the den, hooked up to a big-screen television and

a hi-fi stereo system! I'm not just a game unit—I'm a multimedia machine!" It's ironic then that Nintendo's Gamecube—with its seemingly Mac-inspired square dimensions and playful colors—stands in stark contrast to the PS2. Mario's deck is appropriate for play in either an upscale entertainment cabinet or your little brother's play area. It even comes equipped with a handle, so you can cart it from room to room. And as for Xbox...only time will tell what this super-powered beast will look like. But it's becoming more and more obvious that, yes, you can tell a game system by its cover.

**SLICK
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New for the PlayStation®2!

The critically acclaimed action game MDK™2 Armageddon is coming to the PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system. MDK™ became an instant classic with its offbeat humor and the ingenious Sniper Helmet that could shoot an enemy in the eye from a mile away. Now, picking up where the original MDK™ left off, MDK™2: Armageddon features a new 3D engine, advanced graphics, and new gadgets for outrageous gameplay.

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- Solve puzzles as the brilliant Dr. Fluke Hawkins, using wacky inventions like the atomic toaster and his fearsome alter-ego, Mr. Hyde.
- Blast enemies with four different weapons simultaneously with Max, the six-legged, jet-pack carrying, robotic dog.

MDK™2 Armageddon includes incredible new items for enhanced gameplay, more humor, and a totally new experience. BioWare, creators of the best-selling RPG Baldur's Gate™ are taking the MDK™ universe to all new levels of comic Action!

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PlayStation 2

slick disasters

These five things should be slick—but they're turning into fall-on-their-face failures...

1 NFL GameDay 2001

We should have known to expect the worst when 989 kept this game hidden until just before the PlayStation 2's launch. Instead of a worthy adversary to Madden NFL 2001, we got a piskin game with outa-whack collision detection, awkward animations and visuals barely a step above the PlayStation version. Heck, GameDay is barely better than Acclaim's Quarterback Club 2001, and that's about the harshest criticism we can throw at this game.

2 The Resident Evil Movie

A once-promising script based on the game series and written by George Romero has been ditched and rewritten by writer/director Paul Anderson. The new version shares little more than the title with the RE game, so prepare to enter the world of screenwriting horror in late 2001.

3 The Launch of the PlayStation 2

Right up through September, Sony claimed it would ship 1 million PS2s for the system's U.S. debut on Oct. 26. Well, we all know what happened. Sony had to cut the initial shipment in half because, it claims, of a less than bountiful yield from its chip-production plants. Talk about a bummer—especially for hardcore folks duped into buying systems on eBay for \$1K. Some believe the shortage is part of a sinister Sony plot to boost hype for the system. We don't buy that. After all, Sony doesn't make its money from hardware sales—it's game sales that fill the company's coffers. And gamers aren't going to buy games if they can't find the systems. Ah well, there's always Majora's Mask and plenty of solid Dreamcast games to keep you busy until more PS2 trucks roll into your town.

4 The State of the Japanese Games Market

When an amazing game like Jet Grind Radio doesn't sell more than 100,000 copies in its home country, something bad's going on. Lately, the vast majority of Japanese gamers seem interested in only really big titles like Final Fantasy IX and DragonQuest VII. Even the once surefire music-games genre is hitting hard times. Let's hope this trend reverses soon.

5 Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee Scrapped on PS2

This here is as much a PR disaster for Sony—whose PS2 is being seriously dissed by developer Oddworld Inhabitants—as it is for gamers who were looking forward to this revolutionary title. Sure, Oddworld is now bringing the game to the Xbox instead, but that means gamers who bought the PS2 hoping to play Munch's Oddysee will have to spring for a whole new system this fall.

hironobu sakaguchi Hironobu Goes to Hollywood



Hironobu Sakaguchi is best known as the man behind the Final Fantasy series. If it weren't for his pioneering efforts (along with the help of Yoshitaka Amano), we probably wouldn't be playing RPGs as we know them today. But now Sakaguchi, stepping out from his usual role as game producer; the frontman for Squaresoft's most successful franchises has added the title of movie producer to his already substantial résumé. Bringing the Final Fantasy series to the big-screen was already challenge enough, but add the task of making it the most realistic CG movie ever made and the

complexity of the project rises proportionately. As it often takes days just to render one second of on-screen footage, it's no wonder this top-secret project has been in the works for over two years now. Add in some of Hollywood's top acting talent to provide the voices, and you've got the makings of a critical and commercial blockbuster.



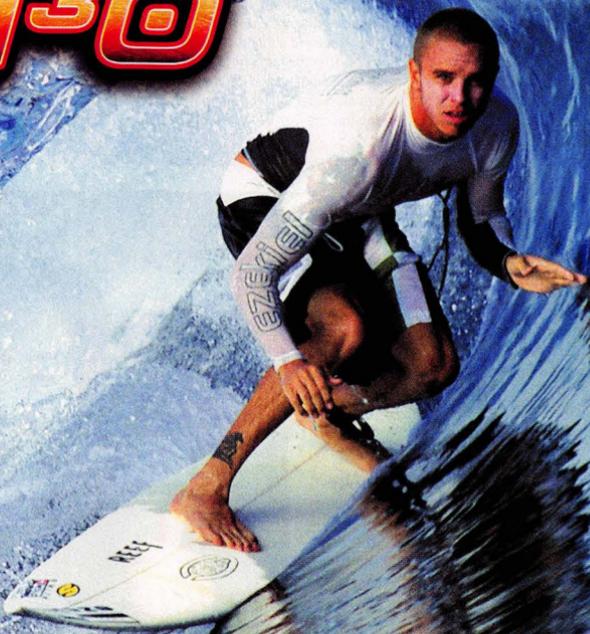
Daytona USA 2001 Let's Go Away!

Who doesn't love four-player coin-op Daytona USA? Although everyone's waiting for Daytona 2 on the DC, we're more than happy to pass the time with this updated online (yes!) version of the classic original. Sega is promising all the old tracks will return as well as the Desert City course from the PC version and Rin Rin Rink, a completely original circuit. Of course, the really exciting part is the online play. Up to four people can hook up and race any track along with up to six CPU-controlled cars. SegaNet players already have the sports and shootin'. With Daytona USA 2001—and Phantasy Star Online—SegaNet will have all the big genres covered.



PlayStation 2

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smilebit Sega's Jetsetters

Responsible for the little-known "Let's Make a Professional Baseball Team" series in Japan, the former AM6 division, now known as Smilebit, made waves among the cognoscenti when it first released screens of Jet Set Radio (Jet Grind Radio in the U.S.). Utilizing the cel-shading technique to powerful effect, Jet Grind Radio combines the wide-open levels of Crazy Taxi, the vertically minded acrobatics of Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, and the animation-quality graphics of Fear Effect into one big amazing gaming powerhouse. With its pumping soundtrack and some cool quirky gameplay ideas (like allowing players to download any jpeg via the Internet and spray-paint them within the game), Jet Grind Radio put Smilebit on the lips of every critic in the industry as a development team to watch. Despite an inexplicably poor showing in Japan, Jet Grind Radio will most likely turn a lot of heads here in the U.S., and it will certainly boost Smilebit's street cred here. If JGR wasn't enough, Smilebit also has the amazing-looking Gun Valkyrie in the works, as shown at the recent ECTS.



tetsuya mizuguchi Game Artists United by Fate

Tetsuya Mizuguchi may not be a household American name, but this groovy hep-cat is the leader of Sega's new-school. While Yu Suzuki is Sega's sage mentor, responsible for games like Virtua Fighter and Daytona USA, Mizuguchi-san is the youthful techno-loving wunderkind behind such legendary games as the Sega Rally series, Manx TT and most recently Space Channel 5 for the Dreamcast. Aside from cooking up the sequel to Space Channel 5, Mizuguchi and his development team, United Game Artists (formerly known as R&D 9), are currently devising a completely new game that is reported to break the mold on how games are played. Unfortunately, we have no idea what this is supposed to mean, but Mizuguchi offers this tidbit: "I can't talk about the new project yet, but things are going ahead. Very new, very conceptual, very first experience. I hope this game can realize a new fantasy." Make of that what you will, but judging from this man's past efforts, you can almost be sure it will be something special.



SLICK
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hitmaker If the Name Fits...

Are these guys Hitmakers? They sure as hell are. The artists formerly known as AM3 are responsible for, among other things, Virtual On: Oratorio Tangram and the sleeper-hit Virtua Tennis. While their unreleased (in America) Derby Owner's Club isn't likely to make anyone's most-wanted lists here, two of Hitmaker's other upcoming arcade games might: Confidential Mission and Crackin' DJ. Confidential Mission hopes to pick up where Virtua Cop 2 left off, with light-gun-style action that emulates the best parts of VC, Time Crisis, House of the Dead and even Silent Scope. The graphics, as can be expected, are on point. Crackin' DJ, on the other hand, demands attention because of its bizarre visual style. Looking like...oh, we don't know, Jet Grind Radio characters on crack, Crackin' DJ—which is sure to out-DJ Konami's Beatmania—sports a wire-frame set of onscreen characters who respond to your machinations on the dashboard turntable featured on the arcade version. You can expect Confidential Mission and Crackin' DJ—both of which are Naomi-board titles—to hit the DC sometime next year.



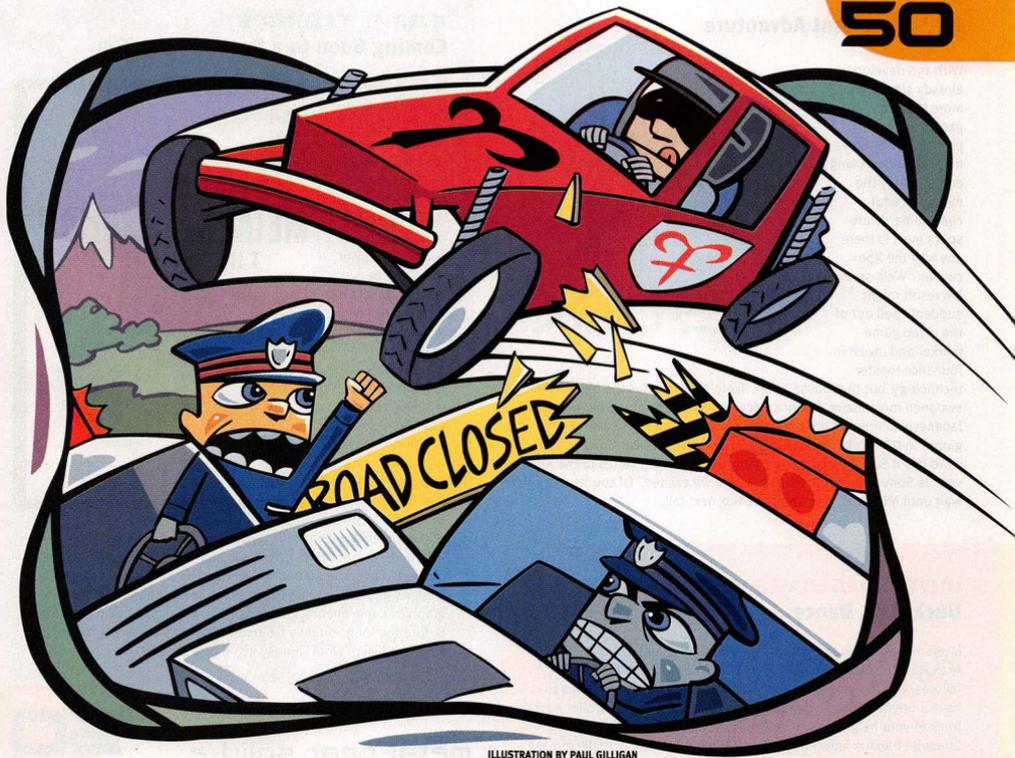


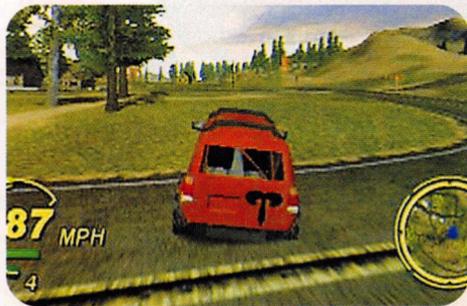
ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL GILLIGAN

Games without boundaries

I Can See Clearly Now, the Fog is Gone

Every technological leap usually comes with a new genre of game created by it. Need proof? Look at two of the PlayStation 2's launch games, *Midnight Club* and *Smuggler's Run*: Both take advantage of the system's power to create completely free-roaming environments for you to race in and explore. Sure, this gameplay concept has been done on

the PC before with mixed results (*Microsoft's Motocross Madness* shines as a fine example), and with little success on the 32-Bit systems in games like *Driver*, but never like this: no pop-up, no fog and horizons that stretch out for miles and miles.



xbox

Bill's Excellent Adventure

With 150 developers already signed on, more than 100 games in production, \$500 million in advertising and arguably the most powerful console hardware specs ever, is there any way the Xbox can fail? Well, sure—Microsoft might suddenly pull out of the video game market and invest in four-slice toaster technology, but that doesn't look likely. Not only has the big M already swooned most major American developers, many of the big-name Japanese companies are onboard as well. Konami has several nifty games in the works (including a version of Metal Gear Solid 2) and word has it Square might bring a certain large RPG series to the Xbox as well. Is Sony worried? It should be. Are we excited? Of course. We can't wait until Microsoft unleashes the box next fall.



motion-sensing control

Duck, Tilt, Dance

Motion-sensing controllers don't have the prettiest past: The Sega Activator. The Mattel Power Glove. The Broderbund U-Force. All failures. But the next wave of motion-sensing technology looks to have a brighter future. The Samba de Amigo maraca controller keeps track of your height so you can concentrate on acting like the Chaquita banana lady. Kirby's Tilt 'N Tumble has you actually moving your Game Boy up, down and all around to guide the little pink roly polly around maze-like levels. And the only way to dodge bullets in a cool new Konami light-gun arcade game is by ducking in real life; the game detects your motion and adjusts your view on screen

accordingly. Look for more and more ideas like these as the technology becomes even smaller and cheaper to implement.



Game Trailers

Coming Soon to a System Near You

Movie trailers have become an enjoyable (and important) part of the moviegoing experience, and many game developers and publishers have taken a cue from them and begun making trailers for games. The highest-profile case is undoubtedly Konami's drool-inducing Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty trailer, which was shown at E3 2000 and later released on DVD (with a Zone of the Enders trailer, too) in Japan for about \$15. Since then, THQ included a trailer for its Evil Dead: Hail to the King game on the recent DVD special edition of Evil Dead II (and on the game's Web site). As games continue to get better in the sound-effects and graphics departments, game trailers will become commonplace. Before too long you may be enjoying the trailer for the latest Resident Evil or Final Fantasy in a movie theater.



**SLICK
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metal gear solid 2

The Only Game We Want, Really

In 1998, Konami released Metal Gear Solid on the PlayStation. The continuing saga of Solid Snake was heralded by many as the next evolution of video games—packed with the kind of gameplay that makes die-hard gamers weak in the knees and a cinematic flair that a mass audience could appreciate. In fall 2001, director Hideo Kojima and his team hope to repeat that feeling with Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty on PlayStation 2 and Xbox. "Obviously there were a lot of ideas that kept popping up while we were working on Metal Gear Solid 1, but the actual development and planning (of MGS2) didn't begin until after the original was released in Japan," Kojima told us. If the throngs of wide-eyed gamers who camped out to see the nine-minute trailer at E3 (see above) are any indication, MGS2 will be *the* game to get in 2001.





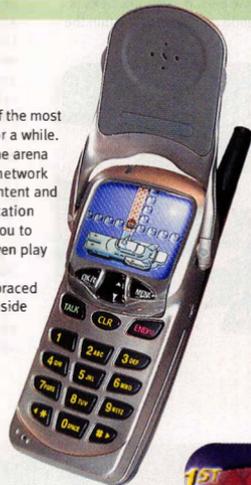
Tiburon studios Swimming with Sharks

If there's one studio that's been quietly lurking the seas, looking for the right time to strike, it's Tiburon (Spanish for "shark") Studios. Located in Maitland, Fla., this sports-game juggernaut is off the beaten track, but they've managed to establish a studio as strong as any of its Silicon Alley competition. After producing tons of sports titles dating back to the Super Nintendo days, Electronic Arts finally nabbed this developer while they were making the move to the PlayStation 2. Their first release? Madden NFL 2001, one of the most popular and impressive games on the platform—one that no doubt puts them in the catbird seat of the PS2-centric Electronic Arts when it comes to assigning new projects. Their new backing hasn't made them too cocky, however. As the team at Tiburon put it: "If we weren't making football games, we'd be bagging groceries, playing on battle.net, or trying to make it in a band."



WAP WAP It to Me

It may have a funny name, but WAP is one of the most important developments in online gaming for a while. While most gaming technologies in the online arena are focusing on broadband and high-speed network play, WAP is all about giving you Internet content and gaming on the go. Short for "Wireless Application Protocol," WAP is a technology that allows you to access the Internet, use applications, and even play games on your cell phone. It's growing at a phenomenal rate, and has already been embraced in both Japan and Europe where the gaming side of things has been extremely influential. A number of publishers already have plans to build WAP games networks, and there are even plans afoot to see many Game Boy games converted to the system. You'll just point your cell phone at the appropriate server, download the game, and get charged for it through your cellular bill.



bleem! for dreamcast

Bleem Casts a New Sony Nightmare

Those of you who enjoyed the novelty of and turbulence caused by the original Bleem! should be excited to hear that the newest version (affectionately called Bleemcast), which allows original PlayStation games to be played on the Dreamcast, is still very much on the way. "We still don't have a street date or titles to announce," Bleem rep Sean Kauppinen admitted, "but we're confident people will be playing some games on the DC by the end of the year." Bleemcast worked wonders for the games being demoed at E3, upping the resolution to 640x480 and incorporating anti-aliasing to smooth out a lot of the PS jaggies. It'll also be a heck of a lot cheaper than a PS2.

SLICK
50

The Grid Quake Meets Mortal Kombat

When you think of popular arcade genres, Quake-style shooters probably don't top your list. But Midway's latest token-cruncher, The Grid (designed by the Mortal Kombat team), has quietly introduced the genre to amusement centers everywhere, bringing the thrill of multiplayer deathmatch to a whole new audience. "I always believed the reason Quake and Sin and all those other games never worked in the arcade," Programmer Ed Boon told us, "was because they were designed for the PC and weren't changed for the arcade. There simply are things you can't get away with in the arcade and we took those into account when designing The Grid." They also moved the camera behind the player, added arcade-style super moves, and a cash-earning system that unlocks secrets and hidden characters—including some familiar MK faces.



Factor 5 Nintendo's Rogue Squadron

Nintendo 64's *Rogue Squadron* is thought by many to be the best *Star Wars* console game ever made. The title was designed by Factor 5, a development team that has been closely tied to LucasArts and Nintendo since the release of *Indiana Jones' Greatest Adventures* on the Super NES. Factor 5 is an extremely important developer for Nintendo right now, considering the lack of third-party N64 games. By the end of 2000, we will see the release of two new Factor 5-developed N64 carts. The first—*Star Wars Episode I: Battle for Naboo*—will have players defending Queen Amidala's homeland from the sinister Trade Federation. The second is the highly anticipated *Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine*, a game that will only be available for sale online and for rental at Blockbuster Video. But far more exciting is the rumor that Factor 5 might be responsible for the first *Star Wars* title to hit Nintendo's Gamecube.



Phantasy star online

This Revolution Will be Televised

Sega's finally brought online play to the console masses. And in January, they'll attempt to bring another console revolution to the American living room—fourplayer network role-playing in the form of Sonic Team's *Phantasy Star Online*. We've been waiting far too long for a new *Phantasy Star* game, and as long as this online experience is painless (which we're sure it will be), we expect to see more RPGs that have you questing with online pals. It looks like Sega is blazing yet another trail that will likely be followed by Sony, Nintendo and Microsoft within the next two years.



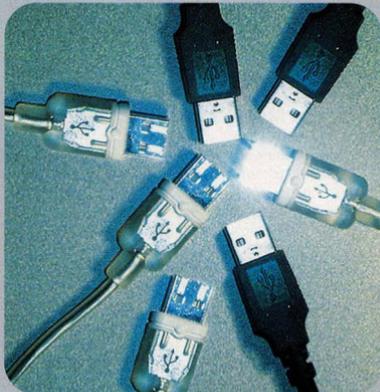
shuhei yoshida The New Force in Sony First Party

There's a new guy in charge of game development at Sony Computer Entertainment America, and he's ready to make a few changes. A 14-year veteran of the company (he served as executive producer of *Gran Turismo* and *Ape Escape*), Shuhei Yoshida has stepped in to oversee all of Sony's internal development studios, most of which were part of Kelly Flock's 989 Studios before it was absorbed back into Sony. Yoshida has made no secret that he didn't enjoy all of 989's games, and he's hoping to revitalize key Sony franchises like *Twisted Metal* and *Syphon Filter* by making sure the teams get more time to work on their games and aren't forced to crank out an installment each year. "If you spend the time to finish a game and make it a success," Yoshida told us, "that allows other teams to spend time making a good game, too. So it's a very positive spiral."

**SLICK
50**

USB connectivity Unlimited Console Peripherals

Owners of the newly released PlayStation title *RPG Maker* have to scour resale shops if they want to pick up Sony's hard-to-find mouse peripheral. SegaNet newbies face the unpleasant possibility of having to wait weeks for toy stores to restock Dreamcast keyboards. Meanwhile, PC users can go to any electronics superstore and choose from a nearly unlimited selection of input devices. Such flexibility exists because most PCs are equipped with USB (Universal Serial Bus) ports, which provide hardware and software developers a single standard to develop for. As a convenience to consumers, Sony has equipped the PS2 with two USB ports. If you have a PS2, and you're playing a game that supports a keyboard or mouse—or perhaps, in the near future, a webcam—you can now select from the same wide array of peripherals that a PC or Mac owner can. Expect the Xbox to offer USB support, too. It's certainly a feature that game developers appreciate. "Any console creator who is putting together a system and is not including USB functionality is being shortsighted," said Cliff Bleszinski, lead designer at Epic Games. "You bring some of the great PC functionality to a stable platform without the configuration headaches that come with PCs."



Playstation 2 The Wait is Over. Or Not.

Lines formed 24 hours in advance. Second-hand units sold for upward of \$1,000. People who had no idea what it was or did stood in line to get one for their boss' kids. Although these may sound uncannily like the events surrounding the Furby craze, they actually describe the launch of Sony's PlayStation 2 game console. With the most hype ever for a U.S. console launch, the PS2's launch put to rest any doubts (and there were few to begin with) that Sony's new system was destined for success. Expect some awesome new incarnations of old faves in the shape of Metal Gear Solid 2, Twisted Metal Black and Silent Hill 2, plus a load of new franchises as the system takes off. That long, cold night waiting in line on Oct. 25 may have been worth it after all.

The screenshot shows an eBay listing for a PlayStation 2 console. The listing title is "PLAYSTATION 2, PS2, READY TO SHIP NOW!!!!!!". The item number is #480736703. The current price is \$630.00. The listing includes details such as quantity (1), time left (1 min, 3 secs), start and end dates, and shipping information. The seller is identified as "Free Radical Design".

Currently	\$630.00	First bid	\$1.99
Quantity	1	# of bids	6 bid history 1 with emails
Time left	1 min, 3 secs	Location	San Francisco, CA
		County/Region	USA/San Francisco
		Postal zip	94102
			View seller's other auctions Add seller's auction

Description
View comments on seller's Feedback Profile | [View seller's other auctions](#) | [Add seller's auction](#)

Shipping
Buyer pays fixed shipping charges. Will ship to United States only. See item description for shipping charges.

Payment
VISA/MasterCard, American Express, Personal Checks, Other. See item description for payment methods accepted.

Item specifics
Buyer pays fixed shipping charges. Will ship to United States only. See item description for shipping charges.

Buyer pays
To review transactions made by this item by the seller, click here.

Description

Global Rankings Will the Real Frag Master Stand Up?

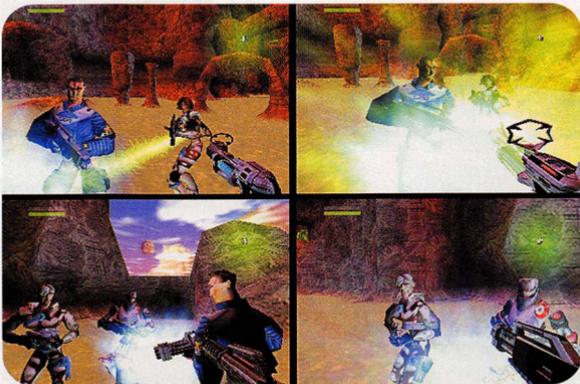


Competitive drive. It's the x-factor that keeps people online for hours at a time, challenging all comers to the newest first-person shooters. If you're a pro, you have to be asking yourself, "How good am I, really? Is it possible that I'm... the best?" If you're new to a death-match game and can't stay alive for more than 30 seconds at a go, you might be wondering, "Are there people out there who are closer to my competitive level?" Mplayer's Global Rankings (www.globalrankings.com) is a system designed to answer these questions by tracking the skill level of all participants, whether they're playing online console or PC games. Fifteen developers—including Activision and Eidos—have announced they'll incorporate Global Rankings' technology in their games. This will provide the hardcore with a reliable means of determining who stands as the number one player in, say, Quake III, and will also keep play more balanced for those who want to avoid taking on Arena masters. The usefulness of this stat tracker is not just limited to shooters: imagine going head to head with online gamers to determine the top team in a virtual football league!

SLICK
50

Free Radical Design The Name is Splitters... TimeSplitters

Those fortunate enough to have come away from the PlayStation 2 launch with a system, a Multi-tap, and a copy of TimeSplitters know the true meaning of gaming nirvana. To the uninitiated: Remember the sleepless nights that followed the discovery of GoldenEye's exquisite four-player deathmatches? TimeSplitters is the first post-Bond FPS to truly recapture that sense of awe. Sure, Perfect Dark is pretty intense, but it doesn't touch TimeSplitters when it comes to speed, visuals or control. It may seem astonishing that TimeSplitters is Free Radical Design's premiere title, but when you learn that this small Nottingham, England, company is comprised of ex-Rare guys with over 18 years of experience in game design, the picture becomes clearer. We know Free Radical has a TimeSplitters sequel in the works, but we're sure this won't be the only franchise spawned by this talented team. 🎮



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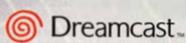


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Our Philosophy

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EGM rates games based on how they compare with other titles on the same system. The highest score we'll give a game is a 10. When a game receives a 10, you can rest assured it's one of the best games ever made—a revolutionary title that truly stands above everything else in its genre for its time. At the other end of the spectrum sits the lowest score a game can receive: a 0.0. This is the kind of game you want to avoid at all costs. It's pure crap, as our scale (above) explains. In the middle lies the average grade, 5.0. We repeat: 5.0 IS AN AVERAGE GRADE. Simple, ain't it?

Review Crew

This Month...

And you thought last month's review section was big—looky what we have here. 74, count 'em (and we know some of you will), 74 reviews. That's the most reviews ever in one issue of EGM, and more reviews than some smaller nations produce in an entire year. We enlisted help from freelancers and our sister magazine *The Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine* (thanks

guys!), but the bulk of them kept the Review Crew busy this month—very busy. Yeah, we know—it must be tough playing video games all day. We're not complaining. But we didn't have enough time to play a few games that came in at the end of deadline for a proper review; check back next month for the final word on *Lunar: Eternal Blue*, *Breath of Fire IV*, and more. 🎮

The Crew



Crispin Boyer

While organizing this year's Slick 50 feature, Crispin took to calling himself "Slick Crisp" for a while. No amount of talc could cool the young Boyer down.
Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure



Jonathan Dudlak

Beer, baloney and babes. The three things a growing game-editor needs. Should you Dudlak ever try to retire, we have the pictures. Oh snap!
Favorite Genres: Fighting, Action



Dean Hager

Deano is currently making a new Hair™! Should our managing editor cultivate an "Atomic-Mushroom Super-Hotly You My Wanker Afro Bowl!" or not? YOU DECIDE!
Favorite Genre: Sports, Racing



Chris Johnston

After camping out overnight for a PS2 with GJ Stewart, CJ came away with a system. But not before "leaving his mark" in the alleyway behind the store.
Favorite Genres: Adventure, Puzzle



Kraig Kujawa

No disgusted was Kraig with 989's GameDay for PS2 that he decided he would not for use the numbers 8 or 9 in any aspect of his daily life anymore.
Favorite Genres: Sports, Strategy



Dan Leahy

"Aloha" Leahy could be heard down the hall shouting "I, Claudius! I, Claudius!" We have yet to wrest the toga from him, and aren't sure we want to.
Favorite Genres: Sports, Action



Ryan Lockhart

Ever since Ryan got his new corporate card, he's been burdened by the position of "Official Deadline DinnerBell Boy." He can hardly wait to go home.
Favorite Genres: Adventure, RPG



Mark MacDonald

Mark just noticed John Davison was accidentally not included on this month's bio page, so in John's place he says "Blimey! Football! Princess Di!"
Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure



James Mielke

Millypop decided to throw an industry-wide party this month, to which all the honeys were invited. He's busy sweeping up the underpants as we speak.
Favorite Genres: Fighting, RPG



Greg Sewart

Greg had himself surgically welded to his copy of Shenmue. The stitches weren't his op for three weeks, but OH! how it's worth it, baby. Pity poor, Gregmew.
Favorite Genres: Racing, Action, RPG

Game of the Month



Skies of Arcadia Pg.195

Since the PS version of *Tony Hawk 2* got game of the month honors already, we didn't figure it was right to give it to the DC port as well—so the award goes to...*Skies of Arcadia*? Wow, we're as surprised as you—Sega's awesome RPG really came out of nowhere and blew us away. 🎮

EDITORS' CURRENT FAVES

- 1 Duke III Arena
Sega
- 2 SSX
Square EA
- 3 Zelda: Majora's Mask
Nintendo
- 4 Skies of Arcadia
Sega
- 5 Jet Grind Radio
Sega
- 6 Capcom vs. SNK
Capcom
- 7 Timesplitters
Eidos
- 8 Shenmue
Sega
- 9 Samba de Amigo
Sega
- 10 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2
Activision

Our Awards



Platinum Awards go to games that get three 10's, the best and rarest review a game can get.



Gold Awards go to games whose average score equals 9.0 or higher.



Games that average at least an 8.0 receive **Silver Awards**.

Additional Contributors

- Ethan Einhorn** Ethan is EGM's Senior Crappy-games-that-no-one-else-wants-to-play editor
- Joe Funk** Ex-EGM EIC. Joe is gone but not forgotten. He chimes in with a couple timely reviews.
- Andrew Pfister** The Priest of Doom can't get enough kart racers—which is good, 'cause that's all he gets!
- Mike Price** Freelancer Mr. Price knows more about wrestling games than any of us would care to.
- Shawn Smith** Shmitty is back at school and looking more and more like Flash Gordon every day. Lucky feller!
- Gary Steinman** Managing Editor for *OPM*, Gary wishes he actually had enough space to say anything.
- Todd Zuniga** Todd works on *OPM* too, where he amuses us all with his bad skateboarding and spiky hair.



Jet Grind Radio



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Smilebit
Featured In: EGM #134
Players: 1
Supports: SegaNet, Jump Pack
Best Feature: Cool cel-shaded graphics
Worst Feature: Dragula!
Web Site: www.sega.com



This game was already great before it was brought here, but the fact that Sega seamlessly integrated a whole new city, and a well-designed one at that, into the U.S. version is truly impressive. **Jet Grind Radio** is like nothing I've ever played before, and it'll likely spawn more than a few clones. I'd try to draw a comparison to other games, but it's not possible. Most importantly, it's fun to play from racing your fellow "Rudies" around town to leaving your mark on every flat surface in sight, JGR always kept me coming back for more. For all you artists out there, you can even create and trade (over the Net) your own custom graffiti tags before heading out to wreak a little havoc. True, this is no Tony Hawk, since all the tricks you can pull are pretty much done automatically. But concentrating on arbitrary burn motions to pull off some dazzling acrobatics isn't the point anyway. Although I do have one gripe about the control, and that's how the camera's used. The camera and "tag" command share the same button, so you'll sometimes end up moving the camera to weird angles and screwing yourself out of finishing the level. That's the only real reason this game isn't getting a 5, other than the fact that Sega decided to use Rob Zombie's Dragula in the game...good Lord, haven't I been subjected to this song enough? I think it's been in every game since 1998. Nonetheless, you should buy Jet Grind Radio.

Greg

This game is a godsend. Pioneering the cel-shading technique that will become commonplace in no time, **Jet Grind Radio** is the sweetest-looking game in town. Couple that with the simple but engaging gameplay and an ass-kicking soundtrack, and the package is practically unbeatable. Although there is no multiplayer or Internet-play, there's always room for that in the sequel. For the time being, an extra city to scoot around in, and the ability to download jpegs from the Net and tag them onto walls is more than cool enough. Why this didn't sell in Japan is beyond me, but you'd be making a mistake if you didn't pick this one up.

Milkman

This is one of those rare games that looks so damn good it's fun just to watch other people play. The fresh (as in original, and as in "stooipid fresh") graphical style is matched by technical excellence, h-g-e detailed levels and a silky framerate. Oh yeah, Jet Grind is a blast to play too. **Combining grinds on everything in sight is an acquired and addictive skill**, and the ability to create or import your own graffiti is icing on the cake. There are a couple annoyances: The camera has a tendency to wander, and the button to bring it back is unfortunately the same that works the spray paint. But overall, JGR is Sega at its finest: unique, stylish and just plain fun.

Mark

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	8	8

Metropolis Street Racer



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Bizarre Creations
Featured In: EGM #132
Players: 1-2
Supports: SegaNet, Jump Pack
Best Feature: Superb control
Worst Feature: Having to replay races over and over
Web Site: www.sega.com



MSR isn't just another GT ripoff. The Kudo system, where you gain points for fast, stylish driving and lose points for ramming obstacles and other cars, is really unique and a lot of fun. That is, until you find yourself playing the same race over and over again to gain one or two extra points. This would be fine if it happened late in the game, but we're talking the second chapter here. Other than that, the game is great. There are loads of cars to unlock (though you can only have three in your garage) as you progress through the myriad of different races: from simple time trials to multi-race championships. A very cool feature is how MSR uses the DC's internal clock. Whether you race in Tokyo, London or San Fran, the game figures out what time it is there and sets the track to day or night accordingly (kinda like Steep Slope Sliders on the Saturn). It's too bad the night setting is so friggin' dark. Prepare to turn the brightness on your TV up quite a bit. **Control-wise MSR is pretty much perfect.** The cars stick to the road realistically but will break loose if you apply too much power in a turn or try to accelerate out of a slow spin. I even like how Bizarre approached the music: You listen to a radio station on each track (complete with static breakup through tunnels), or you can choose to create a custom playlist. I want to love this game and give it a really high score, but—**Arrgh!**—the extreme difficulty prevents it.

Greg

MSR offers some unique racing locales, which look just like the actual locations they are based on. The scenery, lighting and weather conditions all reflect a serious attention to visual detail throughout the game. Although MSR is worth trying out for its ambient novelty, it's a very frustrating game to work through long-term. Earning points to advance in the game is a major battle, as you play through the same courses repeatedly to iron out a few tiny mistakes. When you hit a wall and find out you not only lose a ton of time but also get penalized points, you'll most likely want to wing your controller across the room, so have a few extras handy.

Jonathan

If you're really, really patient and super meticulous you just might beat this game. Seriously, it's one tough nut to crack. Many of the challenges require perfect runs. It's cool though: the gameplay is tight and the cars handle well. **If it were the least bit sloppy, getting through this beast would be pure hell.** So if you're up for many hours of pinpoint accurate racing—this is the game for you. Personally I think it's a bit too ambitious, or dare I say "challenging." In addition, I wish it were possible to access the better cars for a quick race without having to complete 4-5 chapters first. And some of the environments are just too dark and disorienting.

Dean

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	8	8	6



NBA 2K1



Publisher: Sega Sports
Visual Concepts
Featured In: EGM #135
Players: 1-8
Supports: SegaNet, Jump Pack, VMU
Best Feature: Online play
Worst Feature: Shootin' laggy! / s
Web Site: www.sega.com



THUD! That's me hitting the floor after my first impressions of NBA 2K1. Last year's title was above average, but like so many rookies in the league it mimics, it needed to concentrate more on the fundamentals. Visual Concepts did just that and the result is astounding. **It's no longer a block of dunk-athon.** The game packs tons of improvements, but obviously online playtops the charts. Get up to eight freakin' ballers on the court with not one CPU controlled hoop in sight. The intensity of multiplayer online hoops is almost as tangible as it is on the real court. You'll scream "Dude, I've got Marbury...Switch!" in-game action features a much better representation of player contact than last year's title, as guys do the bump-and-grind in the paint and defend the perimeter properly. On the offensive side of the ball, VC has given gamers a wider spectrum of moves to employ. Guards shake and shiver by defenders, forwards swoop to the rack, and the power guys drop step their way to dunkville. This game just exudes hoop savvy. Franchise Mode is in there, as is Street ball and some other treats, but I'll be getting my Spalding-burgers online, thank you. My one gripe is that lag affects this game more so than NFL 2K1. Shooting a precise jump requires exact timing. Lag hampers that equation. But hey, find good connections, adjust a bit (if Quake guys can do it, we can too) and move on. Look for Hossman.

Dan

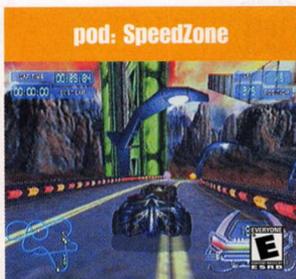
Visual Concepts gets an A+ for this sequel. They fixed the bomb pass problem (last year the computer players couldn't catch) as well as the errant throws to guys standing out of bounds. Oh yeah, the Center doesn't inbound the ball every time either. So essentially they fixed all the crap I bitched about last year. **Now I love it.** It's gorgeous, fluid and competitive as hell. What more could you ask for in a basketball sim? If I could change one thing however, I'd add a few more special moves. There's a decent amount but hey, we could always use more. Online play is pretty good—with a good connection it runs almost as fast as a regular game. Don't think—buy it.

Dean

NBA 2K1 is a welcome breath of fresh air because it's actually a challenging basketball game. To score and breakdown defenses you'll have to think and not just drive your way recklessly to the hoop every time, and the computer is pretty crafty as well. It's the first time I've had to think while playing a hoops game in a while, and that's a big compliment. Sega Sports is truly on a roll. In addition to adding online play, they've managed to fix most of the flaws from last year's game. The rebounding is still sluggish and the computer isn't good at fast breaks, but if those are the only complaints I can muster, then you must know it's worth getting.

Kraig

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	8	9	9



pod: SpeedZone

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: Ubi Soft
Featured In: EGM #133
Players: 1-4
Supports: SegaNet, Jump Pack
Best Feature: Internet play
Worst Feature: Janky control
Web Site: www.ubisoft.com



Due to the nature of Psygnosis' relationship with Sony, it was a stroke of sheer loophole-luck that WipeOut ever wound up on the Sega Saturn. Since there is little chance of that happening on Dreamcast, other publishers have scrambled to fill that void. MagForce Racing was one wretched attempt, and more successfully, Ubi Soft arrived with pod: SpeedZone. First the good news: SpeedZone provides numerous "pods" to race with, more than unlockable, ditto for the tracks. Each track contains a Beetle Adventure Racing-ish (read: tons) amount of shortcuts and secret paths. The better for racing, my dear, as well as swank internet play that allows up to four racers to square off against each other online. There is also a good number of weapons to derail your opponents with, a welcome fact since each pod has a damage meter, meaning you can permanently remove the opposition. On the downside, the pod designs are generally unsightly, though disasters. The tracks could also use improvement. Ill-conceived obstacles and course diversions sap the flow of the races. But control is perhaps the biggest weak point as your car feels way too heavy to provide any sense of feedback. Instead, you career into walls at sharp turns. The turbo boost never quite earns its keep either. SpeedZone certainly provides ample value. Pity the gameplay doesn't follow suit.

Milkman

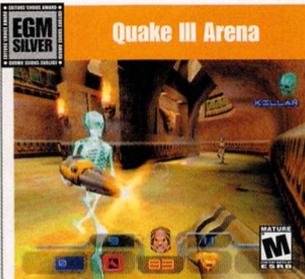
To be successful, a racing game needs a sense of excitement. Whether it's created by really high speeds, flashy graphics, tough competition or the anticipation of having a missile shoved up your tailpipe, something needs to make your palms sweat. This game has none of that. The vehicles are weird, the power-ups suck, the tracks are boring and the music is plain bad. It feels like an old PC game (for good reason). **Even decent online play isn't enough to save pod from mediocrity.** This may not have been a fine game were it released in September '99, but with titles like Le Mans and Ubi's own Speed Devils out there, pod is best left alone.

Greg

For some strange reason I kept getting Crash and Burn flashbacks while playing pod, and that's not a good sign. Perhaps the cars' sluggish feel had something to do with it, or the way they don't even really seem connected to the track, I don't know. It doesn't help that the power-ups are kind of poor, and the tracks seem way too long and uninspired at times. In fact, if it wasn't for its internet play, I wouldn't have played pod for half the time I actually did. This saving grace does get tiring after a while though (once you're in first it's too easy to stay there), so racing fans should just rent, and save their cash for Speed Devils for online thrills.

Ryan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	5	5	7



Quake III Arena

Publisher: Sega
Developer: Raster/id Software
Featured In: EGM #135
Players: 1-4
Supports: SegaNet, Keyboard, Mouse, VMU
Best Feature: Online deathmatch
Worst Feature: Limited to only players
Web Site: www.sega.com



Yeah, there are better single-player first-person shooters out there, but if you have never played multiplayer online deathmatch, prepare for your whole world to change. In the transition from the PC to DC, they got almost all the big stuff right: the game looks incredible and moves smoothly, even in the split-screen modes. All the superb weapon effects and detailed otherworldly levels have been retained, making QIII the best-looking game in the genre—outdoing even its PS2 peers. Ingenious level designs (including the new DC-exclusives) make for battles that can always be strategic, but never boring. The weapons, the characters, alternate play modes (teams, tournament and capture the flag), the fully customizable controls, the number of options—all excellent. The online play is really impressive for a 56K modem—a bit jumpy at times and you won't be using the lightning or rail gun really effectively, but otherwise one helluva ride. My one big problem is the four-player limit. Otherwise the complaints are minor, but numerous: You can't search by name for friends on the Net, the interface needs polish, there's no score display, and the showcores covers the whole screen, plus there's no option to simplify the graphics to up the framerate like on the PC, but the game does it automatically in split-screen. If you're at all into shooters, grab a mouse, keyboard and this game.

Mark

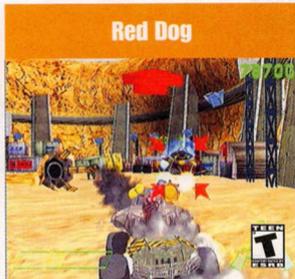
As a die-hard console gamer, I'd never played QIII before. But it makes a good console game—and a great addition to SegaNet's lineup. The one-player game's OK, but playing online will suck away hours of your life. Lag is not unbearable and the framerate is solid for the most part. My only real complaint is that there's no place in the game's interface to meet up with friends online. You have to all know the exact server IP address and port number, and if you only have one phone line, forget about it. Using the DC pad was fine for me (at first)—but you'll be horribly handicapped if playing against someone who has a mouse/keyboard. Lotsa fun.

Chris

I was skeptical of how much fun I would have with this relatively old PC game, but my concerns have been squashed. I'm having a blast with QIII, even though I pretty much suck at it. Sega has spiced the interface and graphics just enough to make it feel more at home on a console, while still keeping everything Quake-ish enough not to upset hardcore fans. The online play only allows for four people at a time, but it's a small price to pay for the smooth online combat that makes it so great. The single-player arenas get boring, but that isn't what this game is made for. Regardless of your Quake strategy, make sure you arm yourself with a keyboard and mouse.

Kraig

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	7	8	9



Red Dog

Publisher: Crave Entertainment
Developer: Argonaut
Featured In: EGM #136
Players: 1-4
Supports: Jump Pack
Best Feature: Originality
Worst Feature: Sporadic difficulty
Web Site: www.cravegames.com



Red Dog isn't a game that immediately strikes you as unique. You drive around, you shoot things. Sounds pretty run-of-the-mill, doesn't it? Well, think again, this is one of the big sleepers of the year. The special thing about Red Dog is the amount of control and strategy in this action game. There's no run-and-gun in one direction here; instead, you must swivel your turret, carefully aim and pick off baddies close and far away—often while you're on the run. The game gets hectic when you must decide when to use your lock-on missiles, power-ups and the energy from your reserves to beef up your lasers. And that's not even mentioning the best thing in the game: your grid-like reflective shield. Red Dog's enemies throw a mess of hurtful things at you, and that's when you can go on the defensive, which becomes the offensive, since blocking energy bolts sends them flying in other directions. Killing enemies with a great Poole-like ricochet shot is not only cool, but sometimes required. The graphic detail is impressive and makes you want to go on to the next level, which is sometimes a little too tough because of some frustratingly hard end-level bosses. You can get a little help by completing extra challenge levels (which are also hard), but the difficulty could prove too much for all but hardcore players. The surprisingly deep multiplayer modes (Deathmatch, Flag, Tag, etc.) offer something anyone can play, fortunately.

Kraig

I'm not sure what's happened to Argonaut since the days of the original Star Fox, but Croc and Buck Bumble didn't quite cut it, and neither does Red Dog. While the game is certainly attractive enough, the stilted gameplay reminds me of Wild Metal. Yeah, it's cool to rumble over Mars-like landscapes and blow stuff up, but when it's delivered at a stop-start pace, then it's no dam good. The framerate stays peppy, and the controls are able enough, but strafing's a bitch, so more often than not, you're a stilted duck while you get the enemy in your crosshairs. Still, the multiplayer action is diverting, and it will probably keep less-demanding gamers entertained.

Milkman

A nice treat for shooter and mech fans alike, Red Dog is the closest thing to a 3D Blaster Master we've yet seen. It's consistently fun to play, and no less than top dog graphically. A wide variety of stage settings show off some really rich artwork and textures, which complement the innovative gameplay. A reflective shield, for example, is often as effective against baddies as one of the many power-ups, making defense strategies equally as important as attacks. On the flipside, the game is flat-out tough at times, mostly because of the frustrating gunsight controls. The aiming takes some getting used to, but all in all, this title's sweet PS2-mediocrity relief.

Jonathan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	6	7	8



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sonic Team
Featured In: EGM #133
Players: 1-2
Supports: SegaNet, Maracas Controller
Best Feature: Rump-shakin' tunes
Worst Feature: \$80 maraca controllers
Web Site: www.sega.com



I love this game. Games like Samba and Konami's Dance Dance Revolution are bringing Japan's most popular genre—peripheral-based music games—to the U.S. And it's about damn time! A few factors will decide how fun this game's going to be for you. One: Do you tap your feet, nod your head, or like to dance to good music? Two: Are you willing to buy at least one pair of maraca controllers (at \$80 a pop)? And Three: Do you have a group of friends who are not ashamed to make fools of themselves at the expense of having a good time? If the answer to all three is yes, then what are you waiting for—run to the store and buy this game. Your non-gamer friends will get into it when you demonstrate it for them. A Challenge mode helps you hone your maraca-shakin' abilities and unlocks a few extra songs (such as Real Big Fish's ska version of the A-ha classic "Take On Me"). The hardest Challenge levels are nearly impossible for all but the most skilled. You can download unlock saves for more songs from classic Sega games through the game's internet option. A handful of minigames and a "Love" mode (both under the Party option) round out the game. The only major drawback to Samba is the amount of cords to deal with when you've got two maraca setups—it requires a fairly open space to play in. A great game that'll get you a little exercise, is innovative, and more importantly—fun.

Chris

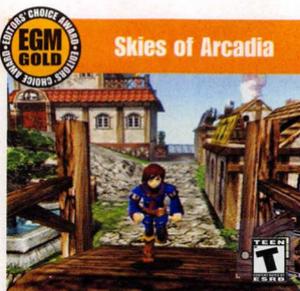
Yes, it's expensive. And yes, you look like a complete idiot when playing, but man, is it fun. And firing My arms are on freaking fire, but I'm smiling, and that's all that counts. **Samba de Amigo is a blast**, and Sega deserves a lot of credit for not only bringing it out, but including the maracas as well. And even though there's tons of songs already packed in, it's cool how you can unlock and download new tunes, including Ken Segal themes like those from Burning Rangers and Afterburner (very, very cool). I just wish the Samba package didn't cost so much, it makes me wonder how many potential maraca maniacs might be passing it by thanks to the high price tag.

Ryan

This game is so much fun! Although the maraca controller is a little expensive, I think it's well worth the price. Just find a friend willing to cover the cost of a second set and you've got a party game that can't be beat. All the music in Samba is excellent stuff that you'll be humming along with (particularly like "Take On Me," nice blast from the past). Sega even went the extra mile and added a few new modes to the Dreamcast version of this arcade port. The "Love" game is pretty neat, where it measures how compatible you are by the shake of the maraca. But it kinda worries me that CJ keeps talking about becoming "Love Amigos." Buy Samba de Amigo.

Greg

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	10	10	9



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Overworks
Featured In: EGM #135
Players: 1
Supports: SegaNet, Jump Pack, VMU
Best Feature: Storyline
Worst Feature: Number of battles in certain areas
Web Site: www.sega.com



What an incredible, incredible RPG. I haven't had this much fun playing a role-playing game in years, and Arcadia has quickly become one of my favorite Dreamcast releases. The strange thing is, at least as of a few days ago, I wasn't even really looking forward to Skies of Arcadia; all that was on my mind was Grandia II and Phantasy Star Online, but now I'll be very surprised if either of these games comes even close to delivering an experience as grand as the one found here. The story in Arcadia is amazing, not to mention insanely long (there's a very good reason why this game comes on two CDs, and no, it's not because of CG movies), the characters are full of life, and the graphics, while plain in some areas, are simply breathtaking in others. But the reason I love this game so much is because Arcadia is a real, true-to-goodness traditional RPG filled with all the classic traits that make these games great, but still featuring enough new aspects to give it a very unique feel. You'll have to use high amounts of strategy in the battles (you have to balance your spirit bar to unleash special attacks) and it's cool how you have full control of which spell classes you'd like to excel in. There are a few small problems though: Attacks come frequently during some areas, and the story line pacing is a little slow during a couple of parts, but it doesn't diminish the fact that Arcadia is an epic RPG. One that shouldn't be missed.

Ryan

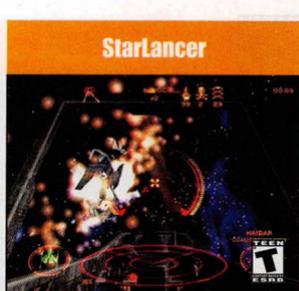
Not since Panzer Dragoon Saga has Sega hosted such an engaging RPG on one of its platforms. Combining some of the best features from old and new game influences, SOA even outshines some of Square's best efforts at times. Although turn-based, the battle system keeps the game's flow going with idle animations for party members, and quick but gorgeous spells and special attacks. The battles are well-balanced, the characters are very endearing, and the story elements exciting. The diverse musical score, while not phenomenal, keeps you from wanting to kill the volume after five minutes—a big plus. SOA's truly a must-have for RPG gamers.

Jonathan

Easily the best-looking RPG yet (believe me, get to disc two), Skies of Arcadia lives up to the hype that its Phantasy Star lineage provides. A unique battle system, a tight-knit group of characters, a wonderful story line, great spell-effects, lots of secrets to find, an epic, melodramatic quest, and the best airborne battles since Panzer Dragoon Saga. **Skies of Arcadia is one of the best RPGs ever.** Once you obtain your own ship, start acquiring a crew, and customize the bejezus out of your island base, the game gets even cooler. While it's not expected for any RPG to reach the heights set by Final Fantasy, Skies is as good as any RPG you'll find. Get it.

Milkman

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	9	8



Publisher: Crave Entertainment
Developer: Digital Anvil/Warhog
Featured In: EGM #136
Players: 1-8
Supports: SegaNet, Jump Pack, Keyboard
Best Feature: Awesome online play
Worst Feature: Confusing button setup
Web Site: www.cravegames.com



I'm a big fan of the Wing Commander series (what Chris Roberts did before starting Digital Anvil), but games like this always lose something when they're ported to consoles. StarLancer's probably fared the best out of all of them, but the seemingly endless button combinations needed to perform some of the easiest tasks can grow tiresome. The other aspect missing in this port is the between-mission roaming around the ship and the FMV mission briefings. Besides that, though, StarLancer is a quality port. All the frantic dogfighting action translates well with high-quality graphics and cinematic music. Huge ships and a multitude of enemy fighters will fill your view with hostile fire and missile after missile. It's really intense. If you were into WC, you'll be into this. The best part, though, is the multiplayer game. Getting a group of eight people all within the same space, either on teams or in a free-for-all, is just awesome. And every time we tried the online play it was lag-free. As a single-player game, though, this is just above average. Mission after mission of space combat is fine on a PC, where you have a keyboard and flight stick available to you, but on a console it won't keep any but the hardcore fans excited for long (the DC keyboard is for that only). Besides, I really miss the great port's earlier titles like Wing Commander IV had. StarLancer is still a solid game and a great online experience, but not spectacular.

Greg

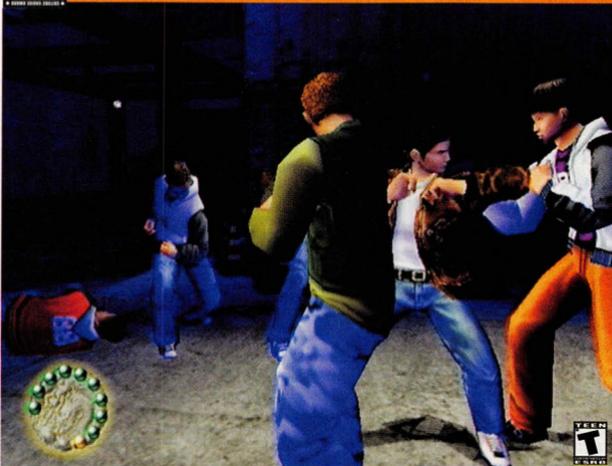
This game brought back good memories from the Wing Commander series, right down to the "kill" score board that I always checked after each mission. **There's absolutely nothing in StarLancer that hasn't been done before in PC space games**, but that doesn't matter since very few have made it to a console system. The graphics are fantastic and the atmosphere of the game sucks you in, even though the co-pilot chatter gets annoying sometimes. What's most impressive are the intuitive controls that use various heads-up displays to make up for the lack of a keyboard. Crave really made this PC port one that Dreamcast owners will want to look forward to.

Kraig

From the minds who brought you the Wing Commander series on PC, **StarLancer is a different kind of console space-combat game.** Much of its story unfolds within the missions rather than during FMV cinematics, and wingmen play a more important role. The game is nice to look at, with its detailed textures and flashy effects (wait 'til you see a capital ship's shields ripple under your blasts). Missions are well-designed (you'll go against a massive asteroid fortress, for instance), but some of the more chaotic sorties get confusing. Fortunately, StarLancer lets you continue to the next mission if you flub a few objectives. Control takes getting used to.

Crispin

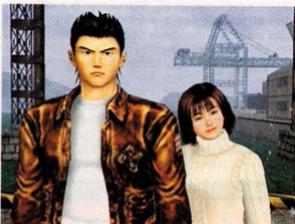
VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	5	7



Publisher: Sega
 Developer: AM2
 Featured In: EGM #128
 Players: 1
 Supports: SegaNet, VMU
 Best Feature: Amazing graphics
 Worst Feature: Story lags on the third disc
 Web Site: www.sega.com



It seems like we've been waiting a lifetime for Yu Suzuki's baby to hit our shores. Shenmue, like so many other Sega titles, promised to push the envelope and break new ground in the adventure game genre, and it does just that. The fully realized town, complete with suburb, residential, shopping and harbor areas, needs to be seen to be believed. The sheer detail is astounding, not to mention the fact that it's all fully populated with pedestrians, vendors and delivery people (you'll even catch a glimpse of Santa as you approach Dec. 25). To add even more life to this virtual world, the sun rises and sets according to the game clock (which is faster than real time, of course) and the weather changes randomly from day to day. During the Christmas season it even snows, coating everything in a blanket of white that makes the landscape look particularly majestic.



The toys Ryo can collect run the gamut from totally cool to downright bizarre. Sega nuts will see lots of familiar faces.

So we've established that the presentation is wonderful, but how does it play? The exploration, Quick Time Events (think Dragon's Lair) and free battle (now think watered-down Virtua Fighter) all flow together very well to tell an engaging story that only suffers once at the start of disc three. What really makes this game, though, are all the extra things Ryo can do. Go to the arcade and play Space Harrier or Hang-On. Race a forklift (something you'll do very often), collect toys and cassette tapes, train at the Hazuki dojo, the list of extrathings to do in Shenmue goes on and on. And unlike traditional RPGs, you really feel like you're living the life of young Ryo, out to avenge his father's murder. Without even noticing it you become attached to him and his circle of friends, through the most realistic "life simulator" ever released. Was it worth the wait? Definitely. Shenmue pretty much defines a whole new genre, and will leave anyone who manages to finish the game with high expectations for the sequel.

OK, so maybe it's not as insane as Dynasty Warriors 2, but there is a point in Shenmue where Ryo and a partner will take on 70 attackers at once (left), including three boss characters!



With all the hype surrounding Shenmue I have to say I was skeptical it could ever live up to the lofty expectations. But it did. Shenmue starts out really slowly, but the jaw-dropping graphics are more than enough to keep you interested, as is the opportunity to interact with everyone and everything you see. Once the story really does get under way, though, it's hard to put this game down. Some may view it as an overhyped tech demo for the Dreamcast, but Shenmue is much more. **I've never played a game that integrated so many different genres so well.** From the myriad of fun and challenging minigames to the pseudo-Virtua Fighter battles, you'll find yourself up late at night just to see what'll happen the next time Ryo crosses paths with the Chinese gang that killed his father. There's even a bit of a love story here, but it's very subtle—a welcome change from all the games that hit you over the head with the romantic entanglements of their main characters. The real beauty of Shenmue, though, is the incredible amount of extra things you can find and do throughout the adventure. The game features more replay value than any adventure title I've ever seen before. The only real concern I had with this game at first was the mediocre voice acting, though it definitely got better as the game progressed. As far as I'm concerned, Yu Suzuki succeeded in realizing his vision for Shenmue, and here's hoping more follow. **B+**

With material that spanned two E3 shows and a lot of hype in between, Shenmue has a lot to live up to. Visually, it does that and more. No two of the hundreds of different characters are alike, and the environments exhibit insane detail. You can interact with just about everything in a verbal or tactile manner. On the opposite end of the spectrum lies some pretty weak voice acting and translation, which could have been avoided with more subtitles. Because of the obviously Japanese setting, keeping the native language audible would have worked exceptionally well. **Despite its shortcomings, Shenmue is a uniquely engaging gaming experience.**

Jonathan

As a Dreamcast tech demo, Shenmue is totally amazing. The graphics, the amount of detail, voices, variety of places you can go and people to talk to—it's breathtaking. But as a game it doesn't fare quite so well. You spend way, way too much time in stunted conversations (especially on the first disc) looking for just the right person or item, and with no way to speed up time you often have to just wait, bored off your butt (the minigames help for a bit, but get old). When you are in the action sequences or when the story is actually progressing, there is nothing like it, but those moments are too few and far between. Impressive but I wanted more excitement. **Mark**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	7	8



Test Drive Le Mans



Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Infogrames
Featured In: EGM #136
Players: 1-2
Supports: VMU, Jump Pack
Best Feature: Sensation of speed
Worst Feature: Limited adjustability
Web Site: www.infogrames.com



This amazing title is the very definition of a sleeper hit. Sleeper because no one (including us) expected it to be so damn good. The sensation of speed is simply astonishing. The in-car view nestles you about two feet off the rushing pavement. The road textures (skid marks, paint markers and best line paths) flow by at a fluid 60 fps, yet still maintain photo-realistic detail. The trees, houses and other stationary objects follow suit. The car models are the best I've ever seen—all 30+ GT1 and GT2 vehicles look very much like the sleek and powerful machines they represent. In addition, nuance effects—paint and window reflections, back-fires, vapor trails and glowing red brake disks—are extremely well done. Toss in the super authentic (very throaty) engine sounds and the aesthetics portion of the game is sealed up. The good vibes don't stop there. The physics and racing gameplay are the strongest part of the package. The cars react to the dynamics of the road just as you'd imagine they would. You can feel the difference when going up hill or down, or when traversing a twisty set of turns on a steep grade. The only reason I'm not giving this game a perfect score is the limited adjustability. It's almost like an arcade game in that regard. Two-player is great but there isn't an option to let the computer cars race at the same time. Other than that, this is the most exciting racing game I've played since Daytona USA. **Dean**

This game blew me away! Set this baby on the hardest difficulty level and watch your 15 competitors beat and bang for position lap after lap. They're really aggressive, and have no problem putting you in the weeds to gain a position. That, combined, makes this a good racing game, no matter what, but there's more. Infogrames raises the bar for graphics in a racing game: These car models rival those found in *TXR* and *F355*, plus they run at a very smooth framerate with spectacular backgrounds. *Le Mans* is just plain fun for both rookies and veteran video game drivers. Yet another reason to own a Dreamcast this holiday season. **Greg**

I never thought a *Le Mans* game could be this fun, but this one is really impressive. The graphics are absolutely gorgeous, particularly the detailed car models and environments—it's just a shame that you can't visually damage them. The controls are crisp and although the game is realistic, it's not so technical that only the most expert drivers can play. One thing that I really enjoyed was the challenge provided by the computer intelligence. Many racing games have drones that do nothing other than serve as window dressing, but here they really bump and grind you all over the course. Ah, there's nothing like a beautiful game that has brains too, right? **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	7	9

The Next Tetris: On-Line Edition



Publisher: Crave Entertainment
Developer: Blue Planet Software
Featured In: EGM #137
Players: 1-2
Supports: SegaNet, Jump Pack
Best Feature: Classic Tetris
Worst Feature: No online Classic Tetris
Web Site: www.cravegames.com



Mere words can't convey how excited I was when I found out Crave was bringing Tetris to SegaNet. It's ironic, since mere words can't convey how disappointed I am at the plain stupid omission of the option to play Classic Tetris online. It's already in the game, why not add an online option? You can't even play Classic Tetris in two-player mode. What's the point then? As for *The Next Tetris*, well, it was never a great game to begin with. Basically the same as the original game, the point is to clear out some stacks of garbage blocks on each level. Or you can play the marathon mode, which is also similar to Classic Tetris, except the different colors of the falling blocks designate how they'll fall when complete lines are formed and removed. What's worse is that the online options for it are all but nonexistent. It makes for very short bouts against your Internet opponents. Not nearly enough to satiate the puzzle bug or even begin to instill the tension and suspense a close game of Tetris is supposed to provide. This game doesn't even support the keyboard for crying out loud! Oh, the presentation is nice and it has a multifly screen saver that kicks in after being paused a few moments. TNT even sports a few remixes of Classic Tetris tunes. Unfortunately, all they really do is remind you of how much you're missing. Don't even waste a thought on this game. Go buy a Game Boy and Tetris DX. At least they did it right. **Greg**

Forget the online part of this game's title—multi-player (online and off) *The Next Tetris* is bunk. The problem with the SegaNet game isn't lag—it's that you can only play one version of Tetris, the Next Tetris, and that version sucks in multiplayer. Basically you and the other guy race to clear the bottom two lines. Yipee. It's often over in 15 seconds, and people win on accident about as often as by skill. One player? *The Next Tetris* isn't so bad, especially in the practice (more like puzzle) mode. Plus you can play Classic Tetris (but why not two player?). It needs more options for the online game, added two-player and online Classic Tetris, and better load times. **Mark**

I love Tetris. I've logged hours upon hours of play on previous versions of it (especially on Game Boy and the Tengen NES version). Never been one for *The Next Tetris*—feels too much like one of those cheap knock-offs from the '90s. If I could play two-player Classic Tetris online or against a friend in the same room, that'd be all I need. Instead, in this pack, Classic Tetris is limited to a one-player game and is not online. Would it have been that hard to make this an ultimate Tetris package? Aside from screen names, you don't know who your online opponents are. You can't chat or trash talk and the games are unbelievably short. Don't waste your money. **Chris**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	5	3	6

Buzz Lightyear of Star Command



Publisher: Activision
Developer: Traveller's Tales
Featured In: EGM #135
Players: 1
Supports: Jump Pack
Web Site: www.activision.com

Best Feature: Looks like a cartoon
Worst Feature: Camera can't keep up with action

Cross-platform games that hit the Dreamcast are always bound to make PS owners wish they owned the little white box that could. *Sega's Buzz Lightyear sports a much glossier coat of paint than its PS brother*. Its framerate is silky-smooth, horizons scale toward you without the distraction of heavy draw-in, and the use of cel-shading gives it the feel of a fully interactive cartoon. The game mechanics are identical in both revs of the game; players are provided with an entertaining mix of racing, action and platforming. This *Space Ranger* doesn't have the time to hang out with a wooden cowboy or traverse a child's house searching for tokens. No, he has places to be—eight different worlds, to be exact. And things to do: 14 intergalactic bandits are on the run, and only Buzz has what it takes to capture them. The game is not without problems—the camera will compel you to throw your controller at times, and the ease of completion makes it a questionable purchase for a seasoned player. But when you get into it, you'll have a hard time turning it off. **Ethan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	6	6

Looney Tunes Space Race



Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Infogrames
Featured In: EGM #136
Players: 1-4
Supports: Jump Pack
Web Site: www.infogrames.com

Best Feature: Superb voice talent
Worst Feature: Item abundance detracts from racing

With all the random license uses out there, particularly with racing games, *LSR* is one of the few that actually makes some sense and plays really well. The Warner Bros. game is competing for a lifetime supply of ACME products, and they use a ton of different gags in each race to try to stop one another. Clever items like the "instant hole" and falling elephants are used to inhibit your opponents' progress. A dozen different outer-space tracks plus several unlockable bonus races keep things interesting, and the environments have plenty of background action without hurting the framerate. Most races ride a character-appealing craft (Wile E. has a novelty rocket, Bugs a flying carrot, etc.) and the dead-on voice talent keeps the witty commentary fresh. Because of the abundance of combative items, races usually end up a battle for a nose-length lead at the finish, as players have the course in a wolf-pack formation getting assaulted in turn. Aside from a couple minor animation ticks, *LSR* may not be every original, but it's good-looking fun for all ages. **Jonathan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	7	8

Ready 2 Rumble Round 2



Publisher:
Midway
Developer:
Midway
Featured In:
EGM #134
Players:
1-2

Best Feature: Unlockables
Worst Feature: No online play

Supports:
Jump Pack
Web Site:
www.midway.com

I'm still wondering when Midway's going to jump into the next millennium and feature online play with their DC games. Blitz, any of the Thunder series games, and Ready 2 Rumble 2 are all great candidates for online action, but not one of them has this option. Not that it would have made Ready 2 Rumble a great game, but it would have made it easier to enjoy what this game is all about—two-person mayhem. The CPU is a worthy opponent, but it's just so much more fun to wall on a friend with whatever silly character you choose. As you'd expect with Midway, the action is over the top fast and furious. **Blocking and defending are not keys to success, as the engine is definitely weighted towards the offense.** Learn the wide number of combos and "rumble flurries" to succeed. Single-player mode features a nice selection of mini-games used to train your fighter, but they grow stale pretty quickly (can you say auto-train?). All in all R2R2 is a pretty decent romp, but I usually take it in 10 to 15 minute doses. If you liked the original, this one's a small step up.

Dan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	6	6

Silent Scope



Publisher:
Konami
Developer:
Konami
Featured In:
EGM #133
Players:
1

Best Feature: You ARE a super-snipier!
Worst Feature: Over before you know it

Supports:
Jump Pack
Web Site:
www.konami.com

I was watching John Woo's *The Killer* at around the same time as I was playing the Dreamcast version of Silent Scope, Konami's arcade port of the same game. Talk about getting into the mood. As the PS2 version before it, Silent Scope on the DC offers the same fast-paced, cherry-pickin' action that made the arcade version such a runaway hit. Basically "on rails," Silent Scope leads you through a series of mission objectives (usually requiring you to rescue some sort of presidential relative), where you must sweep the area with your rifle scope and dispatch any number of terrorists. These short encounters always end with an exclamatory boss-battle, in which it's necessary to target a weak point (head; the head). The game is awesome, for as long as it lasts. That's the main drawback here, despite the inclusion of a training mode and time-attack mode, **the game is just too short.** On the plus side, the DC version's control is better than the overly sensitive PS2 version, and the graphics are the identical! So if you have both systems, go for the DC version.

Milkman

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	7	7

Star Wars Episode I: Jedi Power Battles



Publisher:
LucasArts
Developer:
LucasArts
Featured In:
EGM #136
Players:
1-2

Best Feature: Stunning graphics
Worst Feature: Occasional software glitches

Supports:
VMU, Jump Pack
Web Site:
www.lucasarts.com

In the past year, the Dreamcast has hosted its fair share of PS ports, some good (Soul Reaver), most bad (Tom Raider IV). **Jedi Power Battles falls into the former category, providing Star Wars fans with a game that is light-years ahead of the PS original.** The graphics are breathtaking: Characters animate well and are sharply detailed; environments are comprised of lush, nearly photorealistic textures. John Williams' brilliant score sets the mood perfectly as you battle armies of droids, soldiers and gunnars, either by yourself or with a friend. Armed only with a light saber, you will quickly find yourself addicted to learning new combos, deflecting laser blasts, and throwing enemies across the screen with special force moves. The narrative follows the film closely, making the action all the more engaging. A few minor flaws keep the title a stone's throw away from brilliance: some limited graphic breakup, a brief (but frustrating) vehicle level straddled with slowdown, and slippery jumps which can lead to cheap deaths. Worth checking out.

Ethan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	8	8

Sega Marine Fishing



Publisher:
Sega
Developer:
Wow Entertainment
Featured In:
EGM #137
Players:
1

Best Feature: Gorgeous graphics
Worst Feature: Limited replay value

Supports: SegaNet, Jump Pack, Rod Controller
Web Site:
www.sega.com

This is a good translation of the arcade game. It's simple to learn and the action comes very quickly. It has a larger variety of fish and, in general, it's more exciting (and extreme) than Sega Bass Fishing. Gigantic Tuna, Salifish, Stingrays and other exotic (and ugly) fish troll the waters. The locations, while few (far too few), dish out the excitement of deep-sea fishing well. But because it comes straight from the arcades, the game is on the easy side. It's more about immediate gratification than careful, time-consuming fish huntin'—if you're familiar with its predecessor you know what to expect. Anyone can cast a line, jig the lure a little, and land a 100-pound tuna. It's that simple. It works nicely with the rod controller as well. The graphics are wonderful, the animation very fluid—and for a while—it's a hoot. **Still, even with the minigames and endless parade of monster fish to snag, it think the average gamer will find it too limited for the long haul.** On the other hand, if you can stomach the annoying music, fans of the series will like it a lot.

Dan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	5	6	5

Speed Devils Online Racing



Publisher:
Ubi Soft
Developer:
Ubi Soft
Featured In:
EGM #136
Players:
1-5

Best Feature: All the features of the original, online!
Worst Feature: The single-player game sucks

Supports: SegaNet, Jump Pack
Web Site:
www.ubisoft.com

Let's get the negative out of the way first. The offline play in Speed Devils is just a rehash of the arcade play in the original game (read: it sucks) and the new music is best turned down. OK, now let's talk online play. Speed Devils rocks! **Ubi is the first third-party to get Dreamcast online racing right.** You get to race against up to four other people to earn money through winning, busting radars, setting the top speed, fastest lap time or leading the most. On top of that you can set up trials that other online players can "pay" to enter, and even challenge another speed devil in a winner-takes-all duel where the prize is your ride. Earning bucks lets you upgrade your current cars and buy new ones, plus it better your standing in the world rankings. There's so much to like about this game that it's a shame Ubi Soft didn't do anything to improve on the look of the title other than adding a few new tracks and cars. The bottom line is that if you're interested in racing online, this is a must-buy. If you'd rather play with yourself, there are a lot cheaper alternatives.

Greg

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	7	9

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2



Publisher:
Activision
Developer:
Treyarch
Featured In:
EGM #137
Players:
1-2

Best Feature: New Manual feature
Worst Feature: DC controller isn't as comfy as PS's

Supports:
Jump Pack
Web Site:
www.activision.com

Beyond the stuff you would expect to be different like more pros, parks and music—**Neversoft has cooked up some truly innovative features for THPS2.** By balancing on two wheels between tricks, the "manual" feature lets you limk 'em up like a madman—a quick up and down on the stick and you're in business. A center marked meter tells you if you need to lean forward or back to hold the trick. It's a cool idea that opens up an infinite amount of possibilities (and the huge point totals that follow). If that were the only improvement, it'd still be worth the cash, but there's more. A fairly deep create-a-skater and great 3D park editor are new as well. The park editor is particularly useful because it allows you to visualize the environment as you place the 3D elements. What's the differences between the PS and DC versions? The draw distance is better, certain levels (high school and Venice, for example) have much deeper and detailed backgrounds. Other than that, it's basically the same—but that's good enough. Fan of the genre or not, it's a no-brainer buy.

Dan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
0	9	9	10

Donald Duck: Goin' Quackers



Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: Ubi Soft
Featured In: EGM #135
Players: 1
Supports: Controller Pak, Expansion Pak
Best Feature: Old-fashioned platforming fun
Worst Feature: Over too soon
Web Site: www.ubisoft.com

When it comes to platform games, Ubi Soft has yet to disappoint me (I even enjoyed the often scoffed-at *Tonic Trouble* and *Rocket: Robot on Wheels*). At first glance, *Quackers* looks like any other bad action-platform game with a license stuck onto it. Gameplay is very derivative of others in the genre—especially *Crash Bandicoot*. All the levels you normally find in a platformer are here: jungle, city, haunted house, tombs; but the **pacing and style make it fun to play**. It's not a difficult game—it only took me a few hours to go from the beginning to the end boss. It's clear this was designed for younger players, and after the first level it reminded me of the hours I spent as a youngster playing *QuackShot* (another Donald Duck game). Levels are well-designed and there are never any blind jumps or areas where you can't see your path—a common design flaw in the genre. Graphics have that fuzzy N64 look to them, but the Expansion Pak sharpens it up nicely without slowing it down. The music is repetitive and lame, and some of the sound effects are oddly chosen—Donald seems to say, "Ouch!" when on moving platforms. I wish there were more levels and more of a connection between them and to the end-level bosses. It's a tad light on story, too—the in-game animation was done so well I'd have been nice to see more of it. A fun (if short, old-fashioned) platformer. **Chris**

Remember when Disney platformers were almost always magical? *Castle of Illusion* and *QuackShot* spring to mind immediately when playing this latest Donald Duck game. **Ubi Soft has done an outstanding job here**. The controls are simple, the graphics are pretty (especially with the Expansion Pak installed) and even the music is excellent. Plus every level has a few different goals to achieve, from a time attack to collecting toys, so there's a bit of replay value involved. That's especially good since the game is really short, the only real problem. Kids will definitely love this one, so will old-school gamers weaned on the SNES and Genesis. **Greg**

I really like 2D platformers, but the difference between a game like *Klonoa* and one like *Donald Duck* is all about style and ingenuity. There's nothing significant about *Donald Duck* being in this game at all—you could easily swap him and the peripheral characters out with any other Disney staples and no one would be the wiser. Why are stars and coins always the default collection items? How about some oyster crackers or something? He's a duck! The game is way too short, but it does have a few cool ideas and enemies in play, so it might be a good rental for younger kids. It's certainly not a Duck Tapes (NES) for the new millennium, though. **Jonathan**

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY
8 6 6 5

Hey You, Pikachu!



Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Ambrella (Marigul)
Featured In: EGM #131
Players: 1
Supports: Voice Recognition Unit
Best Feature: It's like having your own Pikachu
Worst Feature: Very simple gameplay
Web Site: www.nintendo.com

Do you or someone you know squeal in glee at whatever cute noise or action Pikachu makes? If it was humanly possible, would they want a Pikachu of their very own to do their bidding? And if that bidding included collecting fruits and berries, helping wayward Pokémon or catching fish, would they be able to die happy? So many questions—and here's the answer. Give them this game and run very fast in the other direction. Hey You, Pikachu! has that same sickeningly cute quality that drives 20 or 30-something women to Hello Kitty merchandise (not that there's anything wrong with that). It's a virtual Pikachu, but not the butt-kicking, animal-shocking variety. Don't expect deep and meaningful conversations—after all, he can only respond with "Pikachu!" What you can expect are a variety of little missions, playing around with other Pokémon for points, and gaining the love of a certain yellow electric mammal. Graphics are about what you'd expect—nothing spectacular, but nothing that looks out of the ordinary for an N64 title. The simple interface is easy enough, but Pikachu likes to do things you don't want him to. Pikachu's voice recognition technology is about on par with Seaman (sans witty rebuttals). He had no trouble understanding me when I said, "Good Morning," or "Eat It" to him. Kids are gonna love it, but older Pokémon fanatics won't find much to get excited over here. **Chris**

The great thing about the Game Boy Pokémon titles is that they really aren't just for kids. Sure the tykes love the sickeningly cute critters, but past the sugar coating adults can find fairly compelling RPGs. Unfortunately this is not the case with Hey You, Pikachu! The "conversations" you have with Pikachu are mostly one-word orders, and the minigames you play together are so simple they make the Mario Party contests seem like RPGs. The graphics are bland and sloppy, and the interface makes it hard to point at what you want. Most of this will matter little to children, who will love it anyway, but if your age or IQ is over 10, skip it. **Mark**

Young Pokémon fans will go ballistic for Hey You, Pikachu! Arguably the cutest member of the Pokémon ranks, the Poke-mascot's voice-recognition adventure will please youngins immeasurably as it gives players a chance to get about as close to this virtual-pet as possible. Say "goodnight!" and Pikachu will hop "I squeal in joy and "Pika!" right back 'atcha. It's a rudimentary Seaman, with more immediate rewards; but the drawback is that it's not only very linear, but that you're hand-held the entire way through. What you're required to say is revealed in red lettering, and that saps the freedom from the game. Good for the under-six crowd. **Milkman**

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY
5 5 6 6

WCW Backstage Assault



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Kodiak Interactive
Featured In: EGM #136
Players: 2-3
Supports: Rumble Pak
Best Feature: Hidden rewards
Worst Feature: Limited gameplay
Web Site: www.ea.com

"Hardcore" wrestling (falls count anywhere, weapons are legal) has become increasingly popular in many a wreslin' title. The problem is, trying to make a full wrestling game out of a game mode didn't work for WWF Royal Rumble, and it doesn't work for WCW Backstage Assault. WCW BA moves the brawling out of the ring and into bathrooms, locker rooms and parking garages. The 3D environments serve up instruments of pain: Players smash each other over the heads with TV cameras, bathroom sinks and gym equipment while setting each other ablaze with fire hazards. But this gets repetitive. Because of the small moves list, too much focus is put on blunt-weapon trauma rather than bustin' moves. I really like the "hidden rewards" system which gives players mission objectives to gain access to new costumes, wrestlers, moves and backstage areas. The commentary is excellent—the announcers get on your case if you attempt too many cheap shots. **The game plays fast enough, but the animation is sloppy** and characters snap into place for motion-captured moves too often. Plus the character models look downright goofy and the 50-plus roster bears little resemblance to their real life counterparts (one guy looked like Crispin). It's too bad really, there are some good ideas that could have been better implemented into a full wrestling game. As it is, it's about as deep as a kiddie pool. **Mike**

WCW, as long as you don't take it too seriously, can be fun to watch. The same goes for this game. Unlike the recent WWF titles in which "realistic" wrestling is the main feature, WCW Backstage Assault borders on silly. It's kind of cool how there are no rings—every single one of the fights takes place in real-world locations, which allows you to bash your opponent with urinals and the like. **But it's hard to overlook the sloppy feeling control** and the fact WCW BA seems like a niche title. By eliminating the ring entirely, it almost comes off more like some sort of secret mode in a past WCW release rather than its own game. Silly fun, but more of a rental. **Ryan**

This is one of those games that's aimed squarely at the heart of the masses, and ends up so middle of the road I can't recommend actually buying it. WCW fans may get a kick out of EA's having taken the action out of the ring and sticking it backstage, where it's "hardcore," but for anyone other than a die-hard fan, *Backstage Assault* is a glitchy, furry, slowly paced unresponsive mess. It's merely OK as far as wrestling games go, but those are never great to begin with. The create-a-player mode is nice, and offers a lot of customizations, and the variety of modes makes this worthwhile for enthusiasts, but for the rest of us it's irrelevant. **Milkman**

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY
5 7 6 6

EGM SILVER

WWF No Mercy

Publisher: THQ
Developer: Asmik/AKI
Featured In: EGM #336
Players: 1-4
Supports: Rumble Pak
Best Feature: Graphics and animation
Worst Feature: CPU run-ins
Web Site: www.thq.com

Make sure you don't pass up this little gem while waiting for a good wrestling game to come out on DC or PS2. Asmik has taken just about everything from *Wrestlemania 2000* and made it better. The **character models and animation are some of the best I've seen** in a wrestling game, although I got sick of waiting for mo-capped moves to complete before I could interfere during multiplayer games. The improved double-team moves make pulling off a "3D" with a friend truly rewarding. The simplified control system is still intact, making the game easy to get into, although having more than two characters on-screen seems to affect the control's timing a bit. Over 50 superstars are now packed into the roster and the super-deep create-a-superstar mode boasts an array of options and moves to make anything from jobber to submission fighter. I was able to make myself, complete with "real" fighting moves, and took out powerhouses Stone Cold and the Rock before slamming into the stone wall that is Al Snow. There is room for improvement: Backstage story lines could be deeper, CPU run-ins are frustrating, still no play-by-play (where's JR and the King?), and the AI in multiplayer is not the sharpest knife in the drawer (start a CPU vs. CPU game and watch the wrestlers stare at each other). Do these take away from the experience? A little, but *No Mercy* is still the best wrestling game on the N64.

Mike

Asmik/AKI's *WWF Wrestlemania 2000* was a fine game, but it hardly felt like a full-fledged sequel to their previous N64 grappler, *WCW/nWo Revenge*. *WWF No Mercy*, however, looks and plays like a proper follow-up. The career mode is more robust, with a **heavier—although barely exciting—emphasis on story and backstage alliances**. You even earn points you can spend on costumes and moves in a special shopping area. Create-A-Wrestler has been made myself, complete with "real" fighting moves, as many face and body options as in Ackland's games. You get all this and the same easy-to-wrap control. The AI needs help, though.

Crispin

I'm not a connoisseur of wrestling games, but this browser is pretty damned cool. **One of the things I like most about it are its merciful controls** that made it easy to pick up and pull off some pretty cool moves. Within minutes, I looked like I was right at home in the ring as I led my opponents into the mat. There's lots of different moves and reversals, but sometimes it felt like the game's collision detection was buggy and didn't register every hit. The game's minor flaws don't drag it down, however: *Mercy* has so many customization options and multiplayer modes that there's little chance you'll get bored bashing these grown men in-rings.

Kraig

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	6	7	9

Batman Beyond

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: Kemco
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1
Supports: None
Web Site: www.ubisoft.com

Best Feature: Hah, that's funny...
Worst Feature: Pretty much everything, it's just not fun

Well, *Batman Beyond* sure is better on the N64 than on the PlayStation, but that's not saying much. It's still a horrible game, but at least you can get past the second level this time. The graphics are a little nicer, the difficulty has been downgraded a tad, and the control seems much less muddy, but these upgrades don't help the fact ***Batman Beyond* is still one of the poorest excuses for a "Final Fight-type" game ever**. For one it's incredibly boring; there's almost no variety in gameplay—punch, kick, jump, punch, kick, jump, and repeat ad nauseum. The visuals are strictly mediocre, and even though the game is technically 3D, you're stuck in a 2D view going through bland room after bland room, fighting bland enemies. Bland enemies, by the way, who have insultingly bad AI—they'll just stand there and let you hit them a few times before striking back. And keeping the keenest feature from the PS version, you can't save your game in *Batman Beyond*, meaning to beat it if you have to sit through hours of pure monotonous hell. It's just an insult to fans of the show.

Ryan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	2	2

Cruis'n Exotica

Publisher: Midway
Developer: Gratiulous Games
Featured In: EGM #336
Players: 1-4
Supports: Rumble Pak
Web Site: www.midway.com

Best Feature: Frantic, fast-paced play
Worst Feature: Lots of draw-in

Teens weaned on the Nintendo 64 should breeze through driver's education class. The system has been home to an astonishing number of racers in its four years; *Cruis'n USA* was introduced at the start of its life cycle, and *Cruis'n Exotica* comes in near its end. **This game is third in a series that continues to improve in quality**. "Exotica" defines "arcade racer": the title's play mechanics are designed to allow for an exciting, instantly accessible experience. Vehicles plow through a wild set of courses (Mars, anyone?), racing on low ground, in mountain tops, even underwater. Plenty of novelty cars are packed into the cart, many of which have to be unlocked. The game runs smoothly, but suffers from a tremendous level of draw-in. This visual hitch can make it difficult to navigate the road, a problem that becomes particularly potent when racing friends in the multiplayer mode. Another concern is replay value: the first 30 minutes or so really hook you in, but when you get the hang of the control, the challenge disappears, and so does the fun.

Ethan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	4	4

Power Rangers Lightspeed Rescue

Publisher: THQ
Developer: Mass Media
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-2
Supports: Controller Pak
Web Site: www.thq.com

Best Feature: Two-player mech battles
Worst Feature: Tedious game play

The thought of THQ releasing another game based on a film/television license should send chills down your spine. **This new *Power Rangers* title appears to have been slapped together with little regard for quality or replay value**. The gameplay is comprised of Gauntlet-style seek-and-destroy missions, inexplicably limited to a single-player mode. Follow an on-screen compass to rescue innocent bystanders from hordes of mutant creatures. Obliterate glowing portals with laser shots emanating from your hands (no idea how) while being chased by endless enemies. This tedium is periodically broken up by poorly designed mech battle stages. A two-player Megazord Arena mode is thrown in for good measure: Face off against a buddy as a giant beast or robot in a first-person, projectile-based deathmatch. Too bad control in this mode is clumsy and basic. The graphics suck throughout: Backgrounds are sparse and blurred, characters are low-res and simply animated. Not even grade-schoolers—the game's target audience—will find much to like here.

Ethan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
2	5	2	2

Spider-Man

Publisher: Activision
Developer: Edge of Reality
Featured In: EGM #336
Players: 1
Supports: Expansion, Rumble, Controller Pak
Web Site: www.activision.com

Best Feature: All of Spider's moves
Worst Feature: Haphazard camera

Anyone who's played the PlayStation version, let's get you out of the way first—*Spider-Man N64* has its own advantages (smoother textures via the Expansion Pak) and disadvantages (way less voice and none of the FMV cutscenes), but neither amount to enough to really make this version any better or worse. So allow me to recap my review of the PS version from three months ago: The game definitely does a great job of capturing the feel of *Spider-Man*. You've got the super strength to pick up and hurl giant objects, you can sling webs to swing around town or tie up enemies, climb on walls—all that stuff. The graphics are sharp, and different level types and boss battles keep things interesting. The problem is when you get in enclosed areas or certain spots like the train in the screenshot above, the camera goes nuts; there's no lock-on system or way to manually adjust it, so you just have to grin and bear it. Also, *Spider* has lots of moves for combat (and you fight a lot), but most of the time boring repeat punches are your best bet. Not classic, but worth a try.

Mark

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	5	7	5

Batman Beyond



Publisher: UBI Soft
Developer: Kemco
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: You can turn it off
Worst Feature: That it also turns on
Web Site: www.ubisoft.com



Not many games can be rightfully described as simply horrible, but that's one of the few descriptions fit for print that truly works for Batman Beyond. That's right, horrible. Actually, this game is more of an enigma. Somehow Kemco took a well-seasoned Final Fight-style combat engine (in which you punch and kick from one end of the stage to the other), littered short stages with incredibly stupid foes, and still somehow managed to make Batman Beyond one of the most difficult games ever; just to pass the second of its 16 levels would take a combination of superhero skill and a large dose of luck. For some reason enemies have no problem hitting you (when they're not standing still, that is), even though you can't seem to touch them. Irritating. Oh, and you can't save your game. Ever. Even though each time you run out of lives the game gives you the chance to restart over at the beginning of the current level, if you ever want to beat Batman Beyond you'll have to do it in one sitting. Not that it's possible anyway. The worst part about Batman Beyond, even more than the complete lack of fun, is the fact it actually has some good ideas. You can switch between different fighting styles that enhance your offense or defense, there are some cool weapons, and dammit, this is just a keen franchise. Of course, the same could have been said about Superman, and look what happened to that.

Ryan

Batman Beyond is a fantastic cartoon. The animation is fluid, the story lines are well-conceived, and the action is fast-paced. Why then, do none of these elements make it into the game of the same name? This is the kind of game acclaim used to bang out, and I thought had been retired a long time ago. Monotonous left-to-right Final Fight-type action (that is, to say, walk, punch, kick). But the graphics look like they were done by one guy with a Yozze. I mean, you could say the developers were trying to "keep the spirit of the animation" intact, but this largely untextured mess only exacerbates the pitiful action on display. It's so bad it's almost funny.

Milkman

We regret that Jonathan was unable to write a review for Batman this month. Following his playing the game, he fell into a complete mental paralysis and has not yet regained consciousness. The following is an excerpt from his last waking moments, spent convulsing in front of a continue screen: "What the hell is happening?! Why are these jumping vacuums firing laser beams at me?! What does this have to do with the cartoon? Why can't I get past level 2! The enemies have friendly fire, but I still can't beat them in three lives! My eyes! It burns!" Pessimistic about Jon's condition, doctors say his last words may have been a cryptic "one point o."

Management

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
3	3	1	1

Cool Boarders 2001



Publisher: Sony CEA
Developer: Idol Minds
Featured In: EGM #136
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: The half-pipes
Worst Feature: Sameold game
Web Site: www.playstation.com



Ah yes, another year another Cool Boarders. After five editions you'd think it'd be perfect. Years of experience and countless hours of refinement have cultivated in a masterpiece right? Not quite. Like so many others that are waving bye-bye to the PlayStation, Cool Boarders 2001 will probably only appeal to its most loyal fan base (maybe). For everyone else it's same ol', same ol'. That's a jaded view, but if you haven't noticed, SSX has broken the genre wide open (it was a long time coming), so that every normal snowboarding game appears to be just that—normal—not to mention dated. If that doesn't bother you, keep reading. While stunning originality and jaw-dropping gameplay won't be used to describe CB 2001 (not by a long shot), it's not all bad. The half-pipes are decent fun. Pulling off big-air maneuvers is entertaining (at least for a few minutes) but viewing the same cookie-cutter tricks over and over gets stale fast. The longer, more intensive slalom courses only compound the problem. They require that you find trick sequences; sometimes they're obvious, other times they're super hard to find—it gets frustrating. The dumbed-down tricks interface (they all are nowadays) works OK, especially for button mashers but again, the tricks aren't awe-inspiring. The final buzz-kill: The graphics are chunky and nondescript. Hold your cash for SSX or the flashier PS2 snowboarding games to come.

Dean

I can imagine the boardroom meeting when Cool Boarders 2001 was being designed. The boss didn't have a clear vision, so everyone raised their hand and threw out ideas taken from games that were successful. Maybe even the marketing department got involved. This game tries to do everything, and it does absolutely nothing. It has a few simulation elements, it rips off Tony Hawk, it even borrows a few things from Road Rash (you can shove the competition while skimming down hills). Just about everything is over the top, but doesn't feel like it is. The only saving grace here is its soundtrack, but why not just buy the music CD.

Kraig

It's getting more and more difficult to pick up and play soulless updates to games that were never that great to begin with. The Cool Boarders franchise peaked with number 2, and 2001 moves me about as much as a bowl of granola. The variety of modes is utterly predictable, and the control is definitely no Tony Hawk. Knowing that, is there any reason to slap down the 50 bucks it would cost to play this "extreme" game? Nah. The graphics are absolutely basic, the inclusion of licensed boards and whatnot means little. Clearly a marketing-driven product that needs a kick in the ass for even showing its face on the slopes. I care not for this game.

Milkman

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	6	2	5

Driver 2



Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Reflections
Featured In: EGM #135
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Wonderfully scripted
Worst Feature: Dramatic slowdown
Web Site: www.infogames.com



Thankfully the sequel rectifies most of Driver's niggly little problems—except the slowdown, which is worse now because of the incredibly ambitious nature of the admittedly very splendid graphics. The weird, all-over-the-place mission structure has been refined into something far more linear and appropriate, and this has been matched with a more effective use of cutscenes for storytelling. The whole "vibe" of the game is much grittier and more aggressive than the first, and the linear nature really helps motivate you to work through the missions. Although you don't have to prove your worth this time (hands up who hated the garage scene at the beginning of D1...one, two, yep, right, that's everyone), the levels are really tough almost right from the beginning. Cops and bad guys are even more psychotic than before (if that's possible), and I have to say that it can get really annoying when you have to retry missions over and over because some nutjob keeps smashing you off the road. The objectives are more varied this time though, making a much more interesting experience; chase people, run away from others, escape from thugs who want to shoot you in the face and tail bad guys on their way to a "drop." It stays compelling throughout, and there are tons of extra modes (like survival, chase and even two-player modes) to ensure this is a high-value game (it even comes on two discs).

John

If this game had been on more capable hardware (Dreamcast or PS2, hello!) it might have earned a better score. It offers engaging mission objectives, a great sense of urgency, a well-crafted story line, and a lot more diversity (i.e., secret cars to use) than the first game. So what's my beef? How about a framerate so bogged down by the overly-ambitious concepts in Driver 2 that it almost seems like it's in slow motion. Curved roads are swell, but with pop-up so bad that entire buildings appear out of nowhere, you want to scream. The control is fine and the game is really fun, but the engine struggles so mightily you wish it a painless death.

Milkman

Perhaps I'm just jaded these days, but with an office full of beautiful Dreamcast and PlayStation 2 games, seeing any title, even one as fun as Driver 2, plagued with slowdown and pop-up just irks me. Badly. Why wasn't this game released on the PS2? Nearly every element is great, from the physics to level design, but it's hard to forgive huge buildings materializing right in front of you with no warning. If you can get over the graphics (which was hard for me), you'll find an incredibly enjoyable game underneath. It's madly challenging at times. The gameplay is still topnotch, but it just leaves me wanting a PS2 version even more.

Ryan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	5	5	5

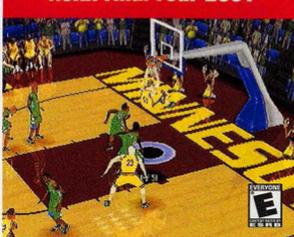
Knockout Kings 2001



Publisher: EA Sports
Developer: EA Sports
Featured in: EGM #135
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Who's who of boxers
Worst Feature: Sometimes stiff animation
Web Site: www.easports.com



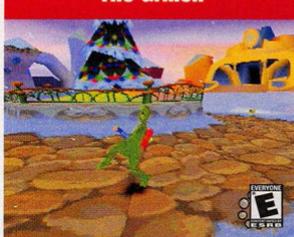
NCAA Final Four 2001



Publisher: 989 Sports
Developer: 989 Sports
Featured in: EGM #137
Players: 1-8
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Road to the Final Four
Worst Feature: Generic teams
Web Site: www.989sports.com



The Grinch



Publisher: Konami
Developer: Artificial Mind & Movement
Featured in: EGM #134
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: The Grinch was a great book
Worst Feature: The Grinch isn't a very good game
Web Site: www.konami.com



Ali, Frazier, Holyfield, Lewis...but not Tyson (you'll have to play Codemasters' game to play with him). That's about the only big-name you won't see in this authentic boxing game. Licensed arenas, judges, boxers and even female fighters: if they've made a name for themselves in a rope-enclosed ring, they're in this game. EA goes beyond just staking a name on a 3D puppet, too. Each boxer looks very similar to their real-life counterpart, and uses one of four specific boxing styles. Some boxers have their own signature moves, and all of them have strengths, weaknesses and bios. The scene seems set for strategic boxing, but somehow, the matches always seem to degenerate into a button-pounding jab fest with a few blocks and pushes thrown in—especially when the match is played with another human opponent. The action is intense, but sometimes the boxers don't punch or react to a punch the way they should. They seem a little stiff. It just doesn't always feel like two 250 lb men are whaling at one another. Still, I like this game. There's something satisfying about beating a lightweight to a pulp with a Heavyweight and pitting famous boxers from past and present. And I highly recommend you turn on the confrontational rap music because it really puts you in the mood. Now if only EA would fix the weird-looking round card grids, this game would be stronger than Don King's hairspray. **Kraig**

Methodically punching and covering up until someone finally falls down—That's KK 2001 in a nutshell. It's not a game for the impatient, or anyone who expects a Ready 2 Rumble-style experience. As a pure sim it's somewhat better than KK 2000. They've added more punches and defensive moves but the boxers are so stiff and robotic it doesn't translate well. There's nary a hint of fluid, lifelike movement in this Rock 'em Sock 'em Robot-inspired game. Fans will like what they've done with the Career Mode and the addition of female boxers. For me it doesn't offer enough to warrant a purchase. I'm content to wait and see how the PS2 version turns out. **Dean**

Boxing titles have been under-represented in gaming since Super Punchout, and EA has done the best job yet of resurrecting a respectable genre. But like all other boxing sims, playing KK isn't nearly as compelling as whacking on a good fighting game. Fighters look good and move crisply when they're separated, but when two come together for close combat, that tactile snap just isn't there. Aesthetically, EA has done a masterful job by including many of the most colorful old-school champions and re-creating classic eras and venues for the bouts. KK is a series that may achieve Madden-like status in years to come, but it's not quite there yet. **Joe**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	7	8

Let's see...989's version of this game for the NBA (ShootOut), while not great, has better overall production value and slicker features. Need a college B-ball game? EA's March Madness is better playing and better a more in-depth national championship mode. That leaves Final Four 2001 squarely at the bottom of the pack as far as PlayStation roundball is concerned, and leaves you with one less game to worry about buying. The visuals, even considering the PlayStation's age, are lacking in a big way. There's just no clarity, and it hampers gameplay when guys get all bunched together. I can't even tell who has the ball sometimes. Speaking of gameplay, you won't see anything new here. The patented 989 shot meter, which I hate, is back for total control shooting. This is supposed to be a more accurate system than just letting go of the button at the top of a jump shot, but I think it's an unnecessary extra. It's also lame in the sense that it totally negates the effectiveness of a pump fake: the bar, obviously, doesn't come up on the pump fake, which tells the other player that it's a fake shot. Dumb. Finally, during repeated season action I defeated top teams with lowly ranked schools on a regular basis. I guess 989 figured every school should be pretty decent, but that's the point of college hoops—huge underdogs and long-standing powers. I'll be saving my cash for March Madness 2001. **Dan**

Jaded hardcore gamers who didn't give a rat's ass about sports games used to always tell me that the only difference between each year's update was the roster. Usually I just told them that was a load of crap, but sequels like this are exactly what fuels that sort of talk. NCAA looks and feels just like last year's game—not bad, not great. There's a few new animations, a new interface, and some commentary y but the biggest adjustment is—whoopee—updated rosters! I love the PS one is on its last leg, but this series should have been put on hold until it could launch on the PS2. It just doesn't seem like 989 Sports has their heart in it anymore. **Kraig**

I have the same complaint about FF 2001 as I did with ShootOut 2001—the players stand around too much. Everything is fine until the shot goes up, after that it's flat-foot city. It hinders the flow of the contest and looks cheesy. Other than that, it's the same of game with some slight tweaks and mods. The ball still rocks around the rim a lot, but falls in more often than not—that's nice. The skill levels are a little strange. On Freshman you can drain threes all day, yet on Senior you can hardly dribble down court without the ball getting stolen. It's a bit cheap on the Junior level as well. Overall it's "eh, OK" but not all that much different than the last version. **Dean**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	5	5

Games based on movie licenses usually meet head-first with disaster. A few exceptions include Toy Story 2 and most of the Bond games, but not The Grinch. This is a very plain exploration/mission-based game that's not whimsically evil (like the book or movie on which it's based)—it's just boring. No longer is The Grinch's mission a Christmas Eve-only event. He wanders through Whoville and the surrounding areas in broad daylight, mostly undetected, messing up the holiday in plain view. I guess merely stealing Christmas isn't enough for The Grinch in his city. You jump on and "pop" wrapped gifts instead of stealing or collecting them. The Mean One hates Christmas and the Who's celebration, but shows it by shoving beehives down their chimneys, launching rotten eggs into their windows, and defacing a statue of their mayor—does he really steal their Christmas? No. Gameplay is very tedious—you do the same kinds of things over and over ad nauseum. After collecting all the blueprints to an invention, you have to endure piecing them together (repeated a half-dozen or so times). Graphics leave a lot to be desired too—they're very flat with a healthy dose of texture pop-in. Music is uninspired, dull and repetitive, with cinematics that are completely devoid of music. A few mini-games can't salvage what is a below-average game. Universal—stop yourself before you turn your ugly good movies into poor games. **Chris**

I'll give the Grinch the kudos it deserves up front: Fine voice-acting on the part of the Grinch and the Dr. Seuss-ish narrator. OK, I'm done. What follows is a joyless movie tie-in, licensing and marketing debacle that fails to offer anything worth playing. Sorry fellas, but going through a patronizing series of "pull the switch, let the dog walk through the hole to get the key to the door open in the room" sub-Spyro exercises is found in the training level pretty much gives you the gist of this game. Too bad this is a title that unwitting parents will buy for children who want more Grinch until the movie comes home on video. The Grinch who stole Christmas indeed. **Milkman**

Yikes. Well, one thing's for sure, that whole joke about movie-to-game conversions certainly comes into play here. This game sucks. Badly. The gameplay isn't horrible but I can't help but feel I've played this basic premise a few times before (Spyro or Crash anyone?), and they all did the scavenger hunt thing about a billion times better. And then there's the graphics. To say this game has first-generation visuals would be too kind: Pop-up and other glitches run rampant for no obvious reason. Grinch is the perfect example of a bad movie tie-in, and should be avoided completely unless you're young to care. Hell, it should be avoided even then. **Ryan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
3	4	3	3

The World Is Not Enough



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Black Ops
Featured In: EGM #136
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock, Multi-tap
Best Feature: Gameplay variety
Worst Feature: Cheap enemy attacks
Web Site: www.ea.com



The World Is Not Enough on the N64 is good; TWINE on the PlayStation ain't so good. Now that's not 'cause this thing's a sloppy port. Both versions, in fact, are different games, from different developers (although both games share the same level locales and characters from the flick). TWINE on the PS was built by Black Ops, the guys behind the barely alive game Tomorrow Never Dies. This sequel uses TMD's engine, except now it looks better and plays in first-person (to give the game a more GoldenEye feel, I reckon—you can even lean around corners with the shoulder buttons). Trouble is, this game's engine still packs annoying quirks. I got stuck on walls and objects while strafing. Enemies spawn behind you or even right in front of you in some areas. Nothing's more annoying than taking fire from a direction you thought you just cleared of haddies. Like the N64 game, this version offers plenty of gameplay variety. You'll ski, play blackjack, rescue hostages and rely on stealth as much as steady aim. In a nod to Medal of Honor, you'll even assume another identity and show guards phony credentials. Enemy animations, such as when guards reload their guns, look phenomenal (Black Ops motion-captured the stunt coordinator from *The Matrix*). But the whole game just feels sloppy, and missions quickly become stale when you're forced to repeat them because of those cheap, respawning bad guys.

Crispin

Oh, I wasn't expecting this. Sure, it's a terrific improvement over the last Bond effort on PlayStation, but it's still hardly GoldenEye for the Sony box. The graphics engine is allegedly more advanced than anything else on the system, blah, blah, and it is extremely impressive throughout. So impressive that in places you can't help think that maybe **Black Ops** was a little ambitious with what they hoped the system could do. Some of the scripted events are great, but there's a sense of struggle as the CD drives, whirrs and chugs. Also, what's the deal with the lack of multiplayer modes? Surely that's a Bond game precedent?

John

This could be the best first-person shooter on the PS one. The only thing that comes close is the Medal of Honor series. It's just too bad that this isn't as good as its N64 counterpart. Why are there no multiplayer modes? Perhaps the design team had too many shaken Martinis when they decided to leave it out, but whatever the reason, it's costing a few points in this review. Fortunately, they had their heads on when they did the rest of the game. TWINE feels like a Bond movie and has an excellent atmosphere comparable with the N64's GoldenEye. If you can ignore the omission of a multiplayer game, then this game's enough, and it could have been better.

Kraig

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	5	5

Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2001



Publisher: EA Sports
Developer: Stormfront
Featured In: EGM #135
Players: 1-4
Supports: Dual Shock, Multi-tap
Best Feature: Speedy game pace
Worst Feature: Little change over PGA 2000
Web Site: www.easports.com



If only there were a way to build a Tiger Woods game around the awesome Camelot engine from Hot Shots and Mario Golf. I'd play the hell out of that mother. Sady Tiger's name and image are slapped on yet another slightly above-average golf offering. Don't get me wrong—it's not terrible, but it doesn't exactly get the 'ol adrenaline flowing. They toned down the goofer elements from PGA Tour 2000. The exaggerated "homing-missile" ball-spin and rockin' soundtrack are much less prominent—thank God. The icons and meters aren't as cartoony-looking either, it's all business now. But most important, the analog swing has been replaced with a more traditional method. Thankfully they aren't forcing that awkward system down our throats this time. Beyond those changes, the game looks and plays just like PGA Tour 2000. From the way the ball runs on the greens to the swooping camera angles that follow the tee shots, it's deejai vu time. Big surprise right? It shouldn't be, remember just about every sports game released this year (from EA or otherwise) is a simple touch-up of the previous edition. It's safe to say PS2 game development has taken top priority for most companies. As for TW PGA 2001, I'd forgive the purchase, especially if you have any of the previous versions. Redesigning the menus and shot interfaces is hardly enough to justify the cost. Hopefully the PS2 version will impress us more.

Dean

Making a realistic yet enjoyable golf game without boring your audience to death is indeed a challenge, one that Stormfront rises to fairly well with this game. It's fun to play for a while, and not exceedingly difficult to get used to. Graphically, well, it's a PS one game, but since it's mostly grass and guys in white shirts, there's not a whole lot to show off anyway. I was unpleasantly surprised by technical glitches, however. The game locked up on me once while I was changing options, and graphics clipped frequently during golfers' swings. For a game with such little action, that's inexcusable. Probably not worth buying unless you're a golf nut.

Jonathan

There's almost everything you could possibly want in a golf game here, sans Chevy Chase and mischievous gophers. Tiger sports six different PGA courses, real pro players, tons of game modes, loads of learning aids for beginners, and an endorsement from the best golf player ever. But there's just one problem—this game just isn't very fun. I felt like I never had enough control over what was going on. The swing meter is too fast, the ball went farther than the game projected, and what's with the ridiculous menu screen music and Tiger's man-child like quips? EA has their heart in the right place, but needs to make this links game realistic and still fun.

Kraig

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	6	6

WWF SmackDown! 2



Publisher: THQ
Developer: Muke's
Featured In: EGM #135
Players: 1-4
Supports: Dual Shock, Multi-tap
Best Feature: Ramped-up Career Mode
Worst Feature: Where are J.R. & the King's voices?
Web Site: www.thq.com



Flipping on your tele for a Thursday-night edition of SmackDown! means you'll probably see more talking than ol'-fashioned fake ass kickings. Now, on the heels of the best PS one wrestling game ever, SmackDown! 2 returns with a similar amount of chatting and jibber-jabber to make the wrestling action that much more intense. While the real WWF is founded on rivalries and fickle, abandoned loyalties, the latest version of SmackDown! imitates this same soap opera-style shift in mentality with brilliance. After all the talk is finished, all the interference is run, and after a sworn enemy has belted you backstage with a chair to the solar plexus, you'll feel your blood pressure rise, a rush of adrenaline tingle, and you'll want to do some serious damage in the ring. How the emotion translates, I can't say. But this game simulates the energy and excitement of its real-life counterpart. The gameplay is razor-sharp, the collision is right-on, and the game looks fantastic. There are enough different match types (Ladder, Hell in a Cell, Coffin Match) to keep you energized through a whole season, which includes every pay-per-view in real life. The Create-A-Wrestler is ramped-up, a huge improvement over the original and if you've seen a move on TV, you're going to see it in the game. Even when the Rock splits. Overall, this is an obvious must-buy for wrestling fans. But it's perfect for parties, too. Definitely check it out.

Todd

This has got to be the best wrestling game on the market today. SmackDown! 2 not only re-creates the action in the ring very convincingly, but does a great job of imitating the soap opera that is the WWF when the brahmas are out of the ring. Plus it's got all the style, intros and moves of your favorite superstar (I live to experience the People's Elbow). Of course, since the WWF's plot changes radically in the space of an hour in real life, THQ's offering is a little out of date, but who cares? The gameplay is solid, and this is a blast to play with three friends. Whether you're a WWF fanatic or just a casual observer, there's a lot to like in SmackDown! 2.

Greg

Wrestling games are always a sketchy proposition, usually designed to appeal to the fans of the genre, at the expense of actual gameplay. Thankfully, WWF SmackDown! 2 is an exception. While the gameplay doesn't quite achieve Soul Calibur standards, it's as good as I've yet seen in a wrestling game, and this is likely the deepest wrestler yet, insofar as features and options are concerned. The create-a-player is so deep it's almost a game unto itself, and the create-a-taunt-manage-pay-per-view and more will let WWF fans cook up just about anything. The graphics are tight, and the presentation is on point. If you must have a wrestling game, this is it.

Milkman

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	7	10

Buzz Lightyear of Star Command



Publisher: Activision
Developer: Traveller's Tales
Featured In: EGM #135
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.activision.com

Best Feature: Fast-paced gameplay
Worst Feature: Lots of pop-up

The Buzz Lightyear featured in 'Star Command' is not a self-aware toy confined to a child's bedroom. No sir, this adventurer is a bona-fide Space Ranger, dedicated to keeping the galaxy safe from the evil Emperor Zurg. Memories of last year's Toy Story 2 game will fade as this title's addictive play mechanics take hold of you. **Instead of a big scavenger hunt, you get a compelling platform/racing hybrid.** Every level starts with a villain shutting desperately toward his/her hideout, hoping to keep away from Star Command's clutches. Your job is to corner these enemies and take them out in one-on-one battles. Defeating a boss opens up additional level objectives, which have to be completed in order to progress to the next stage. Gameplay is diverse; you chase your targets by foot, on hover boards, in jet bikes, and underwater. Note to teen and adult gamers: This title is clearly designed with a young audience in mind, as it's never tough to finish a level. It's a good gift for kids, maybe a fun weekend treat for older players.

Ethan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	6	6



Colin McRae Rally 2.0



Publisher: Codemasters
Developer: Codemasters
Featured In: EGM #127
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.codemasters.com

Best Feature: Excellent control
Worst Feature: Not everyone understands rallying

Iez. I wasn't ready for this. The original Colin McRae Rally 1 was a pretty fantastic game and certainly relieved itself upon its competition from a great height, but nothing prepared me for how much better the sequel would turn out to be. Although fundamentally the same structure as its predecessor (and most other rally games) it's the look and feel of CMR2.0 that really makes it stand out. If your opinion of rallying has been tainted by bad experiences with V.Rally, you have to try this. Throwing a tricked-out Ford Focus into a hairpin and sliding it round, blipping the throttle and quickly pulling it through on opposite lock is a truly rewarding experience. The whine of the engine, the crack and pop of the exhaust as the power surges, the rumble from the DualShock as you fight the car for control: these are all factors that make this game truly superb. It's such a shame that rallying is such a misunderstood sport here in the U.S. If you're into cars, you owe it to yourself to play this game. **It may well be one of the finest racers on the PlayStation.**

John

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	10	8	9

Eternal Eyes



Publisher: Sunsoft
Developer: Tam Tam
Featured In: EGM #128
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.sunsoft.com

Best Feature: Solid, if uninspired, gameplay
Worst Feature: If you're not an anime fan, walk away

With a look and feel similar to Final Fantasy Tactics and Vandal Hearts, Eternal Eyes is a 3D tactical RPG heavily saturated with story line elements. Which, in this case, is a good and bad thing. Even though Eternal Eyes certainly isn't horrible (far from it), this title still lacks the polish found in the similarly themed games before it—meaning tactical RPG fans weaned on FF Tactics will walk away disappointed. **The graphics are solid, if a bit rough at times, the translation is good (if you don't count a few silly parts), and the gameplay is fine—even though I can't shake the feeling I've played this a million times before.** Eternal Eyes mainly lacks any major features to help it stick out of the crowd, unless you count its heavily anime-influenced design. It's easy to see what kind of audience Eternal Eyes was made for, and if you enjoy Japanese animation, you'll get a kick out of the intro. But that still leaves us with a good game that seems like it could have been a lot more, if only a bit more time was put into making the gameplay stand out from the pack.

Ryan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	4	6

F1 Racing Championship



Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: Video System
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.ubisoft.com

Best Feature: Driving school mode
Worst Feature: Overly sensitive controls

Like so many other F1 games out there this is actually a simulation of last year's season. So there's no Jaguar team, Schumacher is as dominant as ever and David Coulthard is still driving like a wimp. Also, as an added bonus to those that care about such things, F1RC is fairly unique as it boasts the presence of young upstart Japanese Villeneuve. Previously too expensive/arrogant to be included in such trifling things as video games, his presence is now welcome thanks to the fact that he's not as great as he and his publicist think he is. Same argument applies for the game as well. Although it boasts a rather groovy driving school mode which actually teaches you to drive F1 style (rather than just applying the brakes for you like all the other F1 games) the rest of the game is **no better than any other simulation of the sport.** It's worth noting that it's a rather more arcade experience than most, and as such sports some rather silly controls. The steering is way too twitchy and the brakes completely lock up every time you touch them. I still think F1 97 is tough to beat.

John

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	5	4

FIFA 2001



Publisher: EA Sports
Developer: EA Sports
Players: 1-4
Supports: Dual Shock, Multi-tap
Web Site: www.easports.com

Best Feature: Improved artificial intelligence
Worst Feature: Choppy animation

I don't know why EA continues to add facial detail and other visual nonsense at the expense of framerate. **This year's title is actually a smarter, more in-depth soccer sim than FIFA 2000,** but 2000 rules in the buttery smooth gameplay department. Beyond that, FIFA 2001 is stellar in every regard. EA nails soccer in terms of presentation, with remarkable play-by-play, unique stadium chants and crowd reactions, and killer on-field action. For soccer buffs who like a challenge, EA has added some sensibility to the defenders marking the pitch. Players will no longer recklessly leave their area in hopes of stealing the ball. The CPU players exhibit restraint and intelligence, and they know when to counterattack. It all makes for good fun, but I can't help but think back to last year's excellent release (which I consider to be the best in the series on PS one). If you're a soccer maven who needs all the latest stats, gameplay options and bells and whistles, this one's worth a look. Otherwise, rent/buy/steal a PS2 and play FIFA the way it was meant to be played.

Dan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	8	7	6

Harvest Moon: Back to Nature



Publisher: Natsume
Developer: Victor Interactive
Featured In: EGM #133
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.natsume.com

Best Feature: Open-ended, non-linear gameplay
Worst Feature: Repetitive tasks can get boring

My life as a farmer started simply enough: Clear the land, buy some seeds, plant, grow, harvest. Make some money, buy a chicken, use her to hatch a coop full of new chicks, and set them to work laying eggs for profit. Sound a bit too much like real life for ya? Well, maybe it is—but that's where Harvest Moon excels. **See, the game is not just a farming sim, but a whole life simulation.** You won't just be working the land. You'll need to find the time to chat up ladies, manage your resources, develop your property (including rebuilding your house), and gladhand with your neighbors, all in an effort to prove you've got what it takes to be the rightful owner of your family farm. In fact, Harvest Moon has so many aspects to it—there's just so much to do—that you can basically customize the entire experience. Still, the game's not for everyone. Having to do certain chores everyday can become a drag by the end of a season, and the complete lack of any fancy protechs limits its appeal. Keep in mind, too, that it's almost the same game as last year's N64 version.

Gary

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	5	9	8

McGrath vs. Pastrama: Freestyle Motocross



Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Z-Axis
Featured In: EGM #137
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.aclaim.com

Best Feature: Lots of shortcuts
Worst Feature: Thin game-play across the board

If you want an example of a good Z-Axis game, check out Dave Mirra's Freestyle BMX. Unfortunately, this effort isn't in the same league. First, the most obvious flaw—the graphics. They're chunky, sparse, bland, the wrong proportions and afflicted with occasional clipping problems. All told, the appearance is on par with PS games released three to four years ago. Things aren't so great in the gameplay department either. Similarities to real motorcycle physics are few. Outside of a couple things (sliding and maneuverability in the air) it's strictly arcade control and handling. OK, last big gripe—the frame rate, while fast, is not smooth. I'm not sure if it's skipping chunks of animation or what, but it certainly jumps around a lot. Oh yeah, the way the riders loop around after a wreck looks totally unnatural. **While not a complete loss, MVP could've been a lot better.** The mediocre graphics and gameplay place it near the back of the pack compared to current motocross contenders. If you're still interested, a one-night rental will quell your curiosity. **Dean**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
3	4	4	4

ESPN MLS Gamenight



Publisher: Konami
Developer: KCET
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-4
Supports: Multi-tap
Web Site: www.konami.com

Best Feature: Seamless controls
Worst Feature: Not as advanced as FIFA 2001

It's weird to see how the fortunes of the two great soccer franchises have changed over the years. While Konami's ISS series systematically beat FIFA hands down each year, it seems now the tables have turned. The latest ISS (and the second this year, strangely) is nowhere near as good as the latest FIFA. Sure, it boasts the MLS license as well as 53 international teams, but the gameplay seems to be more arcadey than ever. When playing against the CPU, there's a distinct impression that the AI doesn't really know what's going on. Passing the ball around seems to confuse the competition, and it's only really the superhuman goals that stop you from destroying your opponent each game. As a multi-player game it's probably a less intense and "realistic" game than the latest FIFA. Some of you may enjoy this tremendously, but try not to get too angry when your players pass the ball to someone you were least expecting. If I didn't know better I'd have thought this was a game from a couple years ago. Shame. **How the mighty have fallen.** **John**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	10	6	8

Moto Racer World Tour



Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Delphine Software
Featured In: EGM #136
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.infogrames.com

Best Feature: Two competent games in one
Worst Feature: The street bikes sound terrible

It's been a while since Delphine Software has raced us with a Moto Racer title; so this one's a little late, yes, but the timing couldn't be better. With a load of mundane motocross sequels on the verge of release, the call for one dominant player is greater than ever. MRWT answers the challenge by masterfully representing both street and dirt racing in one game. The **motocross segment is particularly strong.** The bikes interact with the jumps and bumps of the tracks better than any dirt racer out there. I wouldn't say the physics are exactly real, but overall there's a good balance between arcade and simulation. The indoor dirt races are tough however (and a tad slow). You really have to pay attention to how you cut the turns and maneuver the jumps. In that regard it's very precise—for some, maybe a little too precise. The street portion holds its own but the hideous motor noise (sounds like a whiney kitten) and the excessive draw-in (in two-player mode mostly) kind of sucks, you'll get used to it though. As a two-treats-in-one title, MRWT is worth a look. **Dean**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	4	8	8

NASCAR Heat



Publisher: Hasbro
Developer: Dice
Featured In: EGM #137
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.hasbro.com

Best Feature: Very original challenge mode
Worst Feature: Dull, messy graphics

Being of that rare-breed of game mag journalists who actually enjoys driving in circles for hours on end, I must say this is a refreshing change of pace from most NASCAR games. What I like the most is the "Beat the Heat" option, where you have to complete a series of challenges designed to hone your skills at speedway, super-speedway and short track racing (very reminiscent of F1 Beyond the Limit on the Sega CD). Besides that, there's the regular full season mode and a cool action that lets you compete against times set by NASCAR drivers on various tracks. Control-wise, Heat doesn't disappoint. It's got the best drafting model outside of NASCAR 2001 on the PS2. And the opposing cars are all very aggressive, keeping you alert at all times, especially while in the lead. **The graphics are the only problem with Heat.** They're downright ugly, even by PlayStation standards. No matter how big a racing fan you are, it's hard to look past the jagged mess on the screen. I suggest renting this one and saving your pennies for the PS2 version to be released next year. **Greg**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	7	8	9

Power Rangers Lightspeed Rescue



Publisher: THQ
Developer: Climax Development
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.thq.com

Best Feature: Sharp graphics
Worst Feature: Frustrating control

Fundamentally, this is the same two-player beat 'em up we've been playing since Double Dragon hit arcades well over a decade ago. The only elements that separate this title from that near-ancient ancestor: an awkward isometric 3D perspective, scavenger hunt objectives, and a handful of choppy video sequences. Control is imprecise, as is the collision detection: if you are not standing in exactly the right spot, you won't be able to pull switches directly in front of your character. Jumping is a chore, and often leads to cheap deaths. **There is no skill involved in taking out the countless "battlings" that come at you from all directions; just repeatedly hit the kick or punch buttons until the enemies disappear from the screen.** Enemy bosses are similarly simple to defeat. On the plus side: The graphics are bright, colorful, and vary nicely from level to level. Younger fans of the television program may have fun fighting through the game's missions, but anybody over the age of 12 will find the redundant gameplay a turnoff. **Ethan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	5	2	3



RC de Go!



Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Taito
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.aclaim.com

Best Feature: Clean graphics
Worst Feature: Unnecessary race timer

As resident kart racing expert, I wasn't expecting RC de Go! to be anything more than a sloppy racer with a funny name and goofy Japanese influence. **How wrong I was. RC de Go! is surprisingly impressive,** from the simple intuitive control scheme to the clear and well-crafted graphics, you can tell Taito put a lot of effort into this title. The core of the game lies within the championship mode, racing for money and then upgrading your vehicle. The modification system is like Gran Turismo for R.C. cars: Upgrades can be made to tires, chassis, suspension, exhaust and more. The only baffling thing is a completely unnecessary timer in the Free Race mode. The game is hard enough, and the timer only adds unwanted frustration. Graphically, everything is clean and smooth, and despite a small stuttering effect, the game looks excellent. Unfortunately there's no two-player mode, which would have added more to the replay score (but the modification system more than suffices). This is about as close to a new R.C. Pro-Am as you're going to get. **Andrew**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	6	7	7

Speedball 2100



Publisher:
Empire Int.

Developer:
The Bitmap Bros.

Featured In:
EGM #130

Players:
1-2

Supports:
None

Web Site:
www.empire.co.uk

Best Feature: It boots up
Worst Feature: It boots up

Most of you won't remember this game—it came out on the Genesis without fanfare, but it's history was when it debuted on the Amiga and Atari ST computers (and I'm showing my age now) about 10 years ago, believe it or not. I thought it was a great idea to bring back this brutal game of futuristic soccer, but not like this. Speedball 2100 is one of the worst hatchet jobs I've seen in a long time. They took a decade-old game, put it on better technology, and actually managed to make it play and look worse. That's an amazing feat, accomplished by a horrible mish-mash of cruddy 2D arenas and 3D players, a ball that looks like a Planter's Cheat Ball, and lighting effects worse than a broken strobe light. The "action" moves at a plodding, choppy rate—this might be the slowest "extreme" sports game ever created, not to mention annoying. I believe this game will be sold at cut-rate prices, and don't be tempted—it's not worth \$50. Speedball used to be a great game, and still could be. They need to rethink what they've done and regroup for PS2.

Kraig

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
1	2	1	2

Torneko: The Last Hope



Publisher:
Enix

Developer:
Chun Soft

Featured In:
EGM #136

Players:
1

Supports:
Dual Shock

Web Site:
www.enix.com

Best Feature: Can get addictive
Worst Feature: Everything way too random

Usually when you hear the term "dungeon crawl," it's just a figure of speech for a game where you spend lots of time wandering around dungeons. But with Torneko, I mean it literally. The whole game is a series of randomly generated mazes, filled with random monsters and random items—it's exactly like Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon 2 (also from Chun Soft) in case you're one of the eight people who ever played that. There are a few nice additions here—the town sections and humorous story are much better—but it lacks the item combining and companion system that added at least a little spark to Chocobo's Dungeon. My main problem with these games is not the plain graphics or simple gameplay; it's that they are just too random. **Whether or not you make it through a dungeon has as much to do with luck as strategy.** Also, reverting back to level 1 with each new dungeon kills the feeling of accomplishment in building up your character. The straightforward gameplay and decent challenge can possess a strange, addictive lure, but only for a select few.

Mark

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	8	6	8

Ultimate Fighting Championship



Publisher:
Crave

Developer:
Opus

Featured In:
EGM #137

Players:
1-2

Supports:
Dual Shock

Web Site:
www.cravegames.com

Best Feature: Sound
Worst Feature: Don't make me choose...OK, fine, the frustrating gameplay

Despite the fact that the PS version of UFC was developed by an entirely different company from the DC one, it exhibits the same flaws, only horribly magnified. Forget that the graphics are choppy as sin, the gameplay is beyond frustrating. Probably to make the matches artificially longer, punches and kicks do painfully little damage. Even if you're lucky enough to flail out at your opponent before he can slip in a submission hold (which the AI will try to do without fail in the first 15 seconds), it's near-impossible to inflict enough damage for a victory. If you thought the solo mode was tough on the DC, you best not even try it on the PS. The lack of variety in the play modes and some darn persistent load screens sap any further motivation to keep playing this game, unless you're into the above-average sound effects and featured song by Megadeth. Otherwise the only hope for this title is the two-player mode, which is nothing special, but at least levels the playing field. **If you only have a PS and want to play UFC, you're still better off buying a Dreamcast.**

Jonathan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	6	4	5

WCW Backstage Assault



Publisher:
EA

Developer:
Kodiak Interactive

Featured In:
EGM #136

Players:
1-2

Supports:
Dual Shock

Web Site:
www.ea.com

Best Feature: Hidden rewards
Worst Feature: Limited gameplay

There is nothing to distinguish this version of WCW Backstage Assault from the N64 version. **The same gripes that I found in the N64 review apply here,** although the audio is better and the added FMV views the PS version more flesh. Otherwise the same lack of game modes and limited moves list puts a hurtin' on this title. Goofy character models (although sharper-looking than the N64's), blocky textures and long load times give WCW BA that good ol' first-generation look and feel about five years too late. The game is not without good ideas, though. I liked the ranking system based on points earned during matches for things like diversity of moves, number of weapons used, and method of winning. Also, the "hidden rewards" are cool and add alternative objectives. But the lack of depth and repetitive gameplay kept me wanting to lay the smack down on someone in another game (guess which one). WCW BA could make it as a rental party game due to its fast gameplay and easy-to-learn controls, otherwise, save your money for SmackDown! 2.

Mike

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
3	8	6	5

Woody Woodpecker Racing



Publisher:
Konami

Developer:
Syrox

Featured In:
EGM #135

Players:
1-2

Supports:
Dual Shock

Web Site:
www.konami.com

Best Feature: Smooth framerate
Worst Feature: You've played this already. Many times.

As resident kart racing expert, I wasn't expecting WWR to be anything more than a sloppy kart racer with a weak license and absolutely no new ideas (deja vu). How right I was. Ignore for now that Woody Woodpecker, as a franchise, has been dormant for well over a decade (not to discount of Woody, I grew up watching him myself), but if you're going to use a license, make sure it's one that is relatively recent or has a strong supporting cast. Remember Mario Kart 64 and its built-in "fairness"? That's present in WWR—placing first is often a matter of luck. Not helping matters is the clumsy power-sliding, which you'll need for practically every turn. The courses are laid out fairly well, but again, it's nothing you haven't seen before. Graphics are simple, but colorful, and with a nice and steady framerate the game is nice to look at. **But there's not much under the hood.** If you must have every kart racer made (and there are people out there who do, I'm scared), this is just about average; which says more about current kart racers than WWR.

Andrew

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	4	2	5

WDL: Thunder Tanks



Publisher:
3DO

Developer:
3DO

Featured In:
EGM #135

Players:
1-2

Supports:
Dual Shock

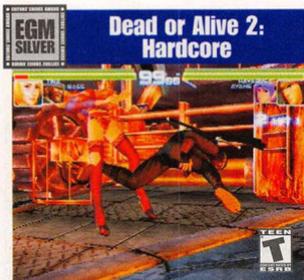
Web Site:
www.3do.com

Best Feature: Amusing cinemas
Worst Feature: Horrendous visuals

Fans of 3DO's Battle Tanx series will be disappointed by WDL's lack of depth. Modes of play are limited to tournament bouts—there aren't any campaign options to be found, which of course dramatically limits the replay value of the single-player game. That could be overlooked if the title presented an engaging multiplayer experience, but it doesn't. When challenging human opponents, most rounds amount to little more than seeing who can hit the fire button more quickly. The tanks are slow and awkward to control, so attempting to dodge enemy fire is futile. The most intuitive manner of play would have been to move your vehicle with one analog stick while rotating its turret with the other, but inexplicably, there is no option for stick-stick control. The graphics are hideous, too—everything is muddy and pixelated, and the buildings you annihilate appear to be made of paper maché. **The whole package looks and feels like a first-generation PlayStation game.** Either wait for the more polished PS2 version, or better yet, skip the title altogether.

Ethan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
2	5	2	2



Publisher: Tecmo
Developer: Team Ninja
Featured In: EGM #136
Players: 1-4
Multi-tap: Yes
Supports: Super-fast 3D fighting
Best Feature: Cheap AI
Worst Feature: Cheap AI
Web Site: www.tecmoinc.com



Now in its fourth incarnation (the U.S. DC version, the Japanese PS2 version, and the enhanced Japanese DC version preceded it), *Dead or Alive 2* finally reaches the PlayStation-loving masses in what Tecmo hopes is the definitive version of the game. The changes gamers will notice right away are the new story mode stages (the VF3-like rooftop stage and desert stage), the half-dozen tag-battle stages (the DC version has only one), and the addition of loads of extra costumes. Tengu, the boss character, becomes playable once unlocked, as does the Leonese Bayman, who now returns from the first game. There is a wealth of other little secrets, but the highlight is the gameplay itself. Much faster and far more visceral than Tekken Tag, *DOA2 Hardcore* is the fastest 3D fighter around, and the best fighter on the PS2. Team Ninja has finessed the gameplay so it is much more than the Virtua Fighter wannabe critics once labeled it. There is plenty of technique to master, especially in tag-battle, with its multi-tiered levels. The downside is that the AI can be incredibly cheap, having no problem pulling off the counters and reversals that human players struggle with due to sluggish timing. The control is also less responsive than the Dreamcast version, but not so much that it really changes the gameplay. The story line is also so superfluous with plenty of laughable dialog. Still, a must-have for new PS2 owners.

Milkman

One of three fighting titles now available for the PS2, *DOA2:HC* is the platform's best. The rushed Japanese PS2 version has been cleaned up a bit, and the action, while similar to Tekken stylewise, is a lot smoother. The multi-level, interactive backdrops really beef up the gameplay, as do the punchy sound effects and fluid animations. One of *DOA*'s best features is the reversal system, which lets you counter attacks with a well-timed button press and really affect the tide of battle. *Hardcore* adds a few extra ones, and some story elements over the DC *DOA2*, but isn't different enough to warrant owning both versions, so buy accordingly.

Jonathan

I really enjoyed *DOA2* on the Dreamcast so naturally I really enjoy it here too, but not quite as much. Perhaps it's just me, but *DOA2 Hardcore* doesn't seem to be as responsive as the DC version—sometimes I noticed a small lag in trying to counter moves or switching characters. It wasn't sluggish to the extent that it really hurt the game, but it was certainly annoying for someone who was weaned on the DC release's timing. The graphics are phenomenal though, and the new modes, costumes and stages are keen, making this a must-purchase for fighting fans—and even with its small problems, there's no doubt *DOA2* plays better than Tekken Tag.

Ryan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	7	8



Publisher: EA Sports
Developer: EA Sports
Featured In: EGM #133
Players: 1-4
Multi-tap: Yes
Best Feature: Balanced gameplay
Worst Feature: Numb thumb (you'll see)
Web Site: www.ea.com



The FIFA series doesn't carry quite the same weight here in the good ole U.S. of A. as it does in Europe. It does, however, have a long-standing tradition of being a nice blend of sim and action (arcade, if you will) soccer. The PS2 version does nothing to tarnish that reputation and actually improves upon it. One of the most appealing aspects of FIFA, to me, has always been its ability to represent a statistically complete soccer match in a 15-min. game (two six-minute halves). You get the ebb and flow, a fair number of scoring opportunities and the usual 2:1, 1:0 score that soccer was founded on. The game's design also fosters a sense of accomplishment for newbies, as a few button presses can have you looking like Pelé. It's kind of similar to being a button masher in a fighting game. You might get some wins and do some pretty things, but you really don't know how you did it. Once you hit your stride, however, your enjoyment will increase ten-fold. There are plenty of killer moves on offense, but they have to be cleverly implemented to pose a serious threat to the defense. The goals are no joke, either, which is the way it should be. Player models are superbly detailed and gracefully animated. All modes (international, MLS) are there for the taking. FIFA is definitely a solid notch in EA's PS2 belt. If you're looking for a break from the big four (hoops, hockey, football and baseball), this is a great choice.

Dan

Here's another outstanding and seamless transition to the next generation of consoles for EA Sports. There's no breakthroughs in this edition of FIFA, but that's all right, I'm satisfied with what they did here anyway. Basically, they juiced up the graphics to the point that we see exactly why we bought this new system and added a few other bells and whistles. The excellent visuals come at no price to the gameplay. The players move quickly and smoothly (as opposed to Madden, which is somewhat sluggish), and the controls are very responsive. It's a fun, great-looking soccer game, even though it has some lapses of realism.

Kraig

Look at it. Doesn't it look great? Aren't you just itching to play it already? I was really torn on the score for this baby, but in the end it has to be acknowledged that this is one of the finest sports games around. Aside from the fabulous presentation, EA Sports has really got a lot of FIFA's problems licked now. Players no longer move in herds, defenders mark much more efficiently now (especially in their own half), and most importantly, you actually feel like you're fully in control of the ball now. Part of this is due to the faultless animation which really helps the gameplay. Problems? There's still a tendency for the CPU player to be a bit wimpy.

John

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	7	9



Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami
Featured In: EGM #133
Players: 1-2
Supports: None
Best Feature: Old-school gameplay
Worst Feature: Doesn't include Gradius I or II
Web Site: www.konami.com



If you started playing video games after the days of the Super NES, you won't recognize the name Gradius. But back in the day it was considered one of the most addictive (if knuckle-bitingly difficult) shooter series around. Konami's Gradius and Parodius series are perhaps my favorite games in the shooter genre. This one PS2 title has perfectly emulated versions of the latest two arcade installments of the series (including slowdown). I'm not gonna say that the slowdown is bad—because it got me out of some sticky situations more than once. Gameplay is very straightforward—blast enemies through a constantly scrolling level (of varying speed), facing a boss at the end. Memorizing enemy attack patterns and finding the path of least resistance is the key. Of course, that's easier said than done when you accidentally die after being fully powered-up and have to get by on only your standard guns. Gradius IV adds 3D graphics to the equation, but thankfully remains locked to the series' side-scrolling view. The graphics in both games are old, but with some two-dimensional "wow" factor. But that awed stare quickly turns into a look of "oh crap" as you realize that cool-looking plant just grabbed and destroyed your ship. My only question is why didn't Konami include Gradius I and II in the U.S. release of this package? It's the only thing holding this back from being the ultimate shooter collection.

Chris

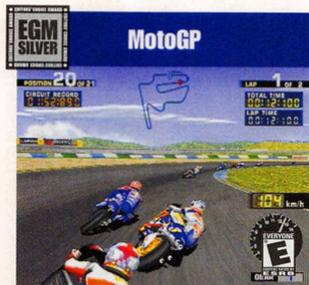
I always liked the Gradius games—the different power-up options and shields offer a great amount of technique, and like all the best shooters, with practice comes mastery. Does it use the power of the PS2? C'mon, look at that screenshot above. Of course not. I can't make any excuses for the graphics—they are a decade old and look it. But once I got into the games, the visuals weren't so important anymore. I was too busy loving the gameplay and cursing at the difficulty—these games are intense! More extras (although I've Boss Rush Mode is cool) or all four games on one disc would have been nice. For hardcore old-school shooter fans only.

Mark

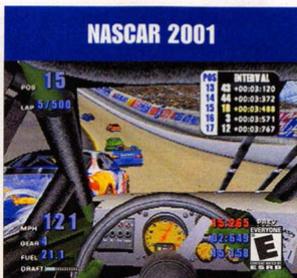
Yeah, yeah, nostalgia is nice, and I used to love the Gradius series, but the timing for this game to come out is just entirely wrong. This isn't the sort of thing you want to pop into your cutting-edge technological wonder. Hell, you could have played this on the original PS when it launched in 1995, why did they wait until now? Also, why put two Gradius games on the disc with no extras? The only new thing that fans of the series will get out of this is a nicely rendered intro that is absolutely useless after it's been viewed one or two times. This half-assed compilation smells like an obvious attempt to cash in on the mass hysteria of the PS2 launch; don't buy it.

Kraig

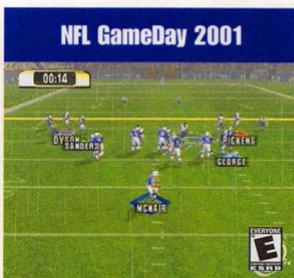
VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	5	4	6



Publisher: Namco
Developer: Namco
Featured In: EGM #135
Players: 1-2
Supports: DualShock 2
Best Feature: Blistering speed
Worst Feature: Learning curve's a little daunting
Web Site: www.namco.com



Publisher: EA Sports
Developer: EA Sports
Featured In: EGM #132
Players: 1-2
Supports: None
Best Feature: Great car and track models
Worst Feature: Feels like NASCAR Lite
Web Site: www.easports.com



Publisher: 989 Sports
Developer: 989 Sports
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-8
Supports: Multi-tap
Best Feature: Decent load times
Worst Feature: That it exists
Web Site: www.989sports.com



True superbike racing has never been represented all that well on a home console. There have been some good arcade versions, but nothing sim fanatics could really sink their teeth into. Namco's changed that with *MotoGP*. Though the learning curve is a little steep, once you get the hang of the bikes in *MotoGP* you'll have a hard time going back to anything else. Whether you have Sim turned on or off, you'll have to let off the throttle and allow your rider to pop-up before each turn, then ease on the gas (thanks to excellent use of the analog buttons on the D52) and lean hard into the turn. Little graphic extras like the sparks from a peg meeting the ground in a turn to the flowing locks of some of the riders as they scream down the straights really bring the package together nicely. In fact, the graphics are the strongest point of this game. As I played it a crowd would gather to watch, which is a rarity around here (or maybe I'm just that good). Either way, **Namco has yet again brought out a topnotch racer that will immediately establish itself as one of the best in the first generation of PS2 software** (which is growing more impressive by the minute). Oh, did I mention the awesome replay mode? It's hands down the best I've seen since I first laid eyes on *Gran Turismo*. With all the extra bikes and other goodies to unlock in this game (it is by Namco, after all), players can just keep coming back for more and more. **Greg**

MGP is a cold starter but once you master the art of slicing corners and feathering the throttle, it gets highly addictive. Arcade fans will be turned off by the ultra-precise control but anyone with a shred of patience will love it. The phrase "using every inch of the track" really rings true. The best racing line takes you within inches of the grass—needless to say it's very intense. The only thing that disappoints me is the length of the game. Finishing the main season doesn't take too long. Opening up all the challenges does however, so in the end it balances out somewhat. Two-player is good, but it'd be nice if the other bikes took part. Otherwise the game is great. **Dean**

I know it sounds weird, but I had to completely reprogram my brain in order to think "motorcycles" while playing this. Having spent the best part of the last 15 years enjoying just about every car-racing game ever made, suddenly being faced with the very different physics of a bike is quite a shock. And I guess, this shoot regardless of anything else, is indicative of how good *MotoGP* is. Bike-lovers will love it, but I have a hunch that many of you will find it uncomfortable at first, especially in the ludicrously tough simulation mode. That said, like all Namco games, it's visually a very rewarding experience. **Not as mainstream as RRV, but still cool. John**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	6	8

NASCAR 2001 on the PS2 looks decent, and the physics model is probably the best EA's done yet for the series. Unfortunately, this is an arcade racer passing itself off as a sim. That's fine for the casual fan, but **I wish EA would start taking this sport more seriously.** This is like releasing NFL Blitz and calling it Madden 2001: Football fans would set the EA building ablaze. I want a 43-car field, not the paltry 20 in this game. I want a pace car that actually has roof lights and dives onto pit lane on a restart, not just one that disappears when they drop the green. I want all the drivers and all the tracks, not just a collection of the top names. I want to adjust the tire pressures on my car. You get the idea. Don't get me wrong, I still have fun with this game once in a while. Especially when turning the difficulty all the way up and running for a few hundred laps on a short track. You really get the bump-to-bumper feel. But it would be so much better if EA left the arcade setup alone and concentrated on making a sim *NASCAR* fans everywhere would go nuts for. Outside of that, EA Sports need only do two other things for next year's edition to be great: Get rid of the weird interlaced slowdown—and for the love of God—commission some better tunes for the game. So I guess what I'm trying to say is that if you're looking for an arcade racer with familiar drivers and tracks, this is it. If a sim is what you want, look elsewhere. **Greg**

With some sports games, you can get away with throwing a whole bunch of famous players into a title with sub-par gameplay and still sell folks on the name recognition. Sorry, EA—it doesn't work with racing. Aside from looking uncannily like a PS one game (equip the rearview mirror and the whole game falls apart graphically), there's not a lot of driver involvement. Only on the more advanced tracks do you have to start worrying about skidding and braking through turns at all. The cockpit view is a nice feature, though, and the several optional perspectives should suit most any racer. But overall, you're much better off with *Ridge V*. **Jonathan**

NASCAR 2001 has a few cool things going for it, but once you add up all the so-so stuff, it's a little weak. I can't warm up to the handling characteristics—the cars don't feel heavy to me. The adjustments help somewhat, but overall they still feel loose, especially on the road courses. **The sensation of speed isn't the best I've seen either.** Some of the track textures are so smooth and non-detailed it hardly looks like you're moving. Then there's that strange interlaced thing as well. On the upside, the sound is very authentic and the car models are good. Other than that, I didn't have much fun with the game. Worth renting for fanatics, but few others. **Dean**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	5	7

The *GameDay* series hasn't been king of the hill (in terms of gameplay or sales) since 1998, but the announcement that it would appear on PlayStation 2 was enough to pique my interest. I mean, this was Sony's new system, right? That had to merit a quality effort. Well friends, I'm sorry to report that the *PS2* version of *GameDay* is gawdawful and horrid. **Did I mention it's terrible?** The prospect of one gamer shelling out \$50 for this garbage sends a shiver down my spine. The stadium intro sequence and a quick glance at the player models get a passing mark, but just barely. Other than that, this game is so bad it's laughable. The hurdle, dive tackle and passing animations, just to name a few, are a riot. I've seen screen passes where the QB turns his back to the line and throws the ball, underhanded, to the sideline. Not to mention that just about every pass goes high enough to come down with kicles on it. The running game is bunk and slow, with no sense of momentum or speed. Line play is truly idiotic, with huge linemen warping through each other and inagically appearing on the other side. Can you say collision detection? *GameDay 2001* is certainly comical, but not in an endearing sense. If Sony had any business sense or pride, they would not release this game (remember Madden in 1996? EA swallowed its pride). I'll close by saying that it is THE must-NO! have PS2 game of the holiday season. **Dan**

What happened to *GameDay*? I had a feeling there were problems, but not like this... For starters, it's not real pretty. It looks better than the PS version but not by much. It certainly isn't as impressive as Madden or NFL 2K1 (not even close). That's not the worst offense though—the animation bugs and spotty collision detection take that honor. **Not since QB Club 2000** have I witnessed so many atrocious collision detection problems. At times a tackler will pass right through his intended target. On a positive note, there are several cool-looking hits, but they're offset by the inane stuff. *GD 2001* needs about six more months in the shop. **Dean**

What an utterly disappointing game. In the last couple of years, this franchise has been losing steam, and this is probably where it's hitting rock bottom. Basically, this looks like *GameDay* on the PlayStation with sharper textures, shinier menus, a smoother framerate and that's it. The gameplay, on the other hand, actually seems a little better. I've seen almost an entire defensive team jump in unison to deflect a pass from a QB no matter where they were. The physics on the tackling are sometimes weird, and plays routinely get wide, and I mean WIDE open. **Skip this game—it isn't good enough to hold Madden's jockstrap. Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	3	4



Orphen

Publisher: Activision
 Developer: Shade
 Featured In: EGM #136
 Players: 1
 Supports: None
 Best Feature: Unique battle system
 Worst Feature: Anime-style overacting
 Web Site: www.activision.com



Orphen isn't really a big name here in the States, but the character should be familiar to followers of the anime upon which the game is based. One of the few RPGs to hit the PS2 at launch, **Orphen tries out some innovative ideas, but has a bundle of flaws that deaden the gameplay significantly.** The real-time battle system fixes the camera and limits members of your party to a stationary position, which allows you to fight close to a dozen enemies at once without hindering the game's graphical backbone. This system gives you a lot more control over your fate than a turn-based one, which is good. However, the on-screen chaos that results from fighting a large group of simultaneously attacking baddies makes it very difficult to tell who is being targeted in your small party. Second, the game is far too linear for an RPG. You're specifically guided through three quests (which feel like one longer one, since they all feature the same characters), and there is very little action in each. Battle locations are scripted, and though the game purports to feature enemy encounters in the story (walking around) mode, I only encountered a small handful of opponents in the "field," certainly not enough to mention. Since your health resets for each scripted battle and there's little to hurt you in your story mode, non-weapon items are near-useless. There may not be many launch RPGs, but **don't commit to Orphen until you've tried it.**

Jonathan

Orphen has some insanely beautiful boss battles. That said, they are also boring. Which kind of sums up the entire game. **Orphen has areas that are just amazing-looking, but as a whole, it just reeks of mediocrity.** The regular battles are chaotic, the puzzles are trite, and the action sequences, thanks to unresponsive control, are aggravating at times. Oh, and it has the most annoying voice acting I've ever heard. Sure, I'm not a hard-core anime fan (I do enjoy them though), but if I hear that little blond chick's soul-piercing voice again, I'm going to hurt someone. If you enjoy anime, you might get a kick out of Orphen. If not, it's a rental at best.

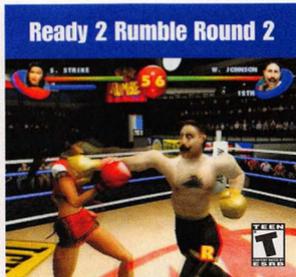
Ryan

I'm all for U.S. publishers localizing as many Japanese games as they can, provided the games are actually good in the first place. Featuring a sluggish, imprecise battle-system, good graphics in some places, bad in others, and possibly the most annoying voice-acting (Orphen himself is a jerk) yet committed to silicon, **Orphen is bordering on awful.** There are some redeeming features to the game, such as the impressive, epic boss battles, some interesting effects, and, um, that's it. But as we all know, it takes more than eye-candy. When you could be playing Majora's Mask, Skies of Arcadia or FFIX, there's no reason to mess with this.

Milkman

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

7 5 5 7



Ready 2 Rumble Round 2

Publisher: Midway
 Developer: Midway
 Featured In: EGM #136
 Players: 1-2
 Supports: None
 Best Feature: Hidden characters
 Worst Feature: Weak defensive moves
 Web Site: www.midway.com



Ready 2 Rumble, as clichéd as it sounds, follows the usual Midway mantra of action, plus more action, plus big, in-your-face character models, equals success. It worked last year, when R2R debuted on the Dreamcast and was a surprise hit. The only problem with Midway's thinking is that they seem to believe their once-original game ideas stay fresh indefinitely. See Blitz 1990-2010 for an example of that. Not to say that R2R isn't, to steal from the proverbial press release, "loaded" with new features. You've got your new hidden characters, your new combos, your updated graphics, etc. But none of them amount to a hill of beans. **What it boils down to is this...R2R is a goofy, button-mashing shell of a fighting/boxing game that doesn't aim to hold your attention span for more than 30 minutes.** It's not Knockout Kings, and it's not Tekken. Sure, you train your boxer (try auto-training for better results) and the mini-games are worth a try or two, but it's all just a diversion before you go button-ballistic for a round or three. The game's mechanics are somewhat unresponsive, which promotes the idea of punching fast and often. Trying to defend is useless, as blocking a punch doesn't give you any significant counterpunch advantage. And if you get backed into a corner, it's usually lights out. Overall, it's lighthearted fun if taken in short bursts. Extended gameplay, however, turns it into heavy-handed boredom.

Dan

This is no big surprises here, but that works well for this by-the-book sequel. Basically, there's more of everything that worked in the last game. More characters, more moves, more modes and a little more depth, as well. The graphics have been improved and each character is more over-the-top and loaded up with personality. The additions of Shaq and Michael Jackson are amusing, particularly for Pacers fans and people who just don't like musical freaks. If you liked the first one, you'll love this sequel, and I suggest that if you haven't played it, maybe you should give it a try. One of the strongest PS2 launch games by far.

Kraig

Depending on what you're looking for, **R2R2 could be great for you...or really frustrating.** If you don't give a crap about real boxing and precise defensive maneuvers, you'll like what you get. It's more about combos and knowing when to unleash them—after that it's fists of fury. Overall, the game is very momentum-based. Once you're stunned or backed up on the ropes, it's freakin' hard to recover. Then you're forced to watch helplessly as your boxer takes an ass-whopin'. On the other hand, when it's your turn to dish out the hurt, it's fun again. If you can deal with the wacky momentum changes, you'll dig it. At the very least it's a great party game.

Dean

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

8 6 6 8



Sky Odyssey

Publisher: Activision
 Developer: Cross
 Featured In: EGM #138
 Players: 1
 Supports: None
 Best Feature: High flyin' arcade-style action
 Worst Feature: A touch of slowdown
 Web Site: www.activision.com



Sky Odyssey isn't the visual tour de force you'd expect from the PS2. The graphics are often low-res, plain, patterned textures (especially along mountain trenches or inside caves/tunnels). Touches of slowdown appear (and it reverts to a lower-res mode) when the screen's filled with effects, but that's nothing but a minor annoyance. It sometimes seems as if it's a PS one game that was given a few extra effects and brought out for PS2. Now that that's out of the way, let me just say—I had a helluva lot of fun with this game. The aptly named Adventure mode has an air to it (scuse the pun) that makes you feel like you're just flying around aimlessly—and it's more realistic than Pilotwings. The sense of flight and speed is good and the control is tight. It isn't fast-paced until later missions, but there are plenty of tense moments. It's like a roller coaster—after a few times you know where the loops are, but you still scream your head off. You'll spend hours flying missions and upgrading your planes. Drawing in Sky Canvas mode and finishing the goals in Target mode—all of it makes you feel like you're really learning to fly. The problem is, there's not enough of it. By the time the game is over, you wish there were more missions, more skywinning, more targets; but there isn't. It's a great game (worth buying if you're hard up for good PS2 games), but the graphics lack variety and I wish there was more to do.

Chris

Every system needs a Pilotwings. The N64 had PW64, the DC had Aerowings, and now the PS2 has Sky Odyssey. **Something about the soothing manner in which you roll your old-school plane through the sky is strangely enjoyable, despite the absence of any firepower.** You'll find a nice variety of missions and some great music, and you can upgrade the heck out of your aircraft. Sadly, the graphics are weak (grainy and repetitious tiles). Yes, it usually pipes along at a consistent 60fps, and there are loads of nice details (clouds, waves, splash), but the overall look of the game is surprisingly primitive. Worth a look if you're easily pleased.

Milkman

Even with graphics that borderline on laughably horrible at times, **Sky Odyssey is one of the few PS2 games I really had a great time playing with so far.** Perhaps it was the topnotch control, outstanding tunes, or the really fun, challenging missions. I don't know, but it's a great feeling to enjoy a game you expected to hate. Similar to Pilotwings on a basic level, Sky's story mode has you performing tasks (while flying through rings), but the ones found here have way more depth than those in Nintendo's flight game. In fact, Sky's only downfall is its crap textures (often affecting PS one quality), but the well-designed levels make up for that. Sort of.

Ryan

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

6 8 8 7



Publisher: Eidos
Developer: Free Radical Design
Featured In: EGM #135
Players: 1-4
Supports: Multi-tap
Best Feature: Excellent multiplayer modes
Worst Feature: Story mode can be difficult
Web Site: www.eidos.com

Everyone's been harping on for ages about what a great game TimeSplitters is, but now that it's actually here, does it live up to all that pre-release hype? Is it really that great? It is obvious that the GoldenEye boys were behind the development? Yes, yes and yes. It's fabulous, so fabulous in fact that we've even had instances of die-hard FPS-haters picking up the joypad and having a good time with the thing. It's that great. Part of the charm is no doubt due to the fact that deep down, TimeSplitters is one of the simplest games around. In one-player story mode the objective is "find an object, kill everyone and then get back to where you started." It's real, old-school, Doom-type stuff, and boy is it And tough. Many players will probably only bother with the story mode when they realize it's the only way to open up the cool stuff for the real "meat and potatoes" of the game which is the multiplayer aspect. Deathmatch, teamplay and capture the flag (ah, in this case) modes are all here and in each mode you can play with up to four of you crowded around the TV and fight it out with or without bots of varying intelligence. Everything in the game is customizable: you can change weapons sets, characters, and then most importantly, you can build your own levels. The editor is a joy to use and assures this is a game that's going to stay with you for a LONG time. **An instant PS2 classic. Buy it.** **John**

Sure, you can play TimeSplitters alone. The single-player game's got no plot and packs simple fetch-the-doodad objectives, but it's still surprisingly fun and addictive—especially the bonus challenges. More than just cleverly designed, the arenas are downright creepy, thanks to the game's oddball aesthetic. But you're best off buying TimeSplitters with a multi-tap and calling over three pals. **This is the fastest, smoothest fragfest on the consoles, and you get all the modes and options you'd expect from the guys who worked on GoldenEye.** You can even play the Story Mode cooperatively. Hack, the map editor itself will keep you busy for days. **Crispin**

TimeSplitters feels like a game that I should like more, but I just can't bring myself to. As a change of pace for first-person shooters, I can appreciate its speed and simplicity, but after awhile it just seems like there isn't enough depth. I really like the amount of stuff that you open up as you progress through the levels because it really makes you want to keep playing. It's just too bad that the story and atmosphere are unimpressive, as is the low interactivity with the environments. The saving grace is the map creator that lets you easily make new maps for multiplayer combat. It's too bad the rest of the game isn't as well thought-out. **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	6	8



Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Epic Games
Featured In: EGM #137
Players: 1-4
Supports: FireWire, USB
Best Feature: Level design
Worst Feature: Not enough multiplayer modes
Web Site: www.unrealtournament.com

Let's get to the big question: **Is Unreal Tournament better than rival launch shooter TimeSplitters?** No. TimeSplitters has many multiplayer modes. UT only has two—Deathmatch and Capture the Flag (unless you break out the FireWire, but we'll get to that later). TimeSplitters runs at a smooth, blazing framerate. UT tops out at a decent 30 frames per second, but only on certain levels, and only when the screen's clear of enemies and effects. Four-player split screen runs about as well as in Perfect Dark. But UT isn't trumped in all departments. It packs more levels, and many arenas are better designed. Just wait 'til you see some of the bigger CTF maps, like Facing Worlds, where you juke past sniper fire across a quarter mile of open terrain. You also get the novel Assault mode, in which you storm enemy strong-holds and complete objectives with your squad of surprisingly clever bots. And while UT doesn't have as many modes or options, it does support more stuff—namely, USB mice and keyboards. Joypad control works fine (thanks to the handy auto-target button), but once you play with a mouse, you'll never want to go back. Plunk down \$40 for a FireWire cable and you can link two PS2s for network play—this is the only way you can play multiplayer Domination, a mode that has your team tagging X-shaped control points. PS2 UT will disappoint fans of the PC version, but console gamers will eat this up. **Crispin**

Unreal Tourny has some cool features. All the weapons have alternate ways of firing, and there's a ton of fun one-player modes (capture the flag, domination, etc.), but overall I can't help but feel disappointed. It's got problems both in design—dull, boxy levels, cliché characters—and execution—a merely decent framerate and average graphics. **Frankly, I expect better from the PS2.** A USB mouse and keyboard make for nice controls, but the fact you can't fully customize them is frustrating. Overall, UT isn't bad for new PS2 owners desperate for some fraggin' action, but the lack of imagination, level design and graphical flair makes it hard to recommend strongly. **Mark**

Aside from not being able to hook up to the Net and find opponents, this is a very good translation of the PC game. I was a bit surprised at how choppy the action got though—in one-player mode it isn't so bad, but it's considerably worse (but playable) in four-player split-screen. If you intend on getting into UT, you'll need a keyboard and mouse. That can get tedious if you play with some friends and want the controls to be fair for everyone, however. There's lots of modes, and the enemy intelligence is considerably better than Quake III, or any other first-person shooter. If you really like this type of game, buy it, but otherwise it's a really good rental. **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	6



Best Feature: It's a pretty little thing
Worst Feature: Little more than a particle showcase

Publisher: Sony CE
Developer: Sony CEJ
Plays Like: Missile Command
Players: 1-2
Supports: None
Web Site: www.scea.com

Yeah, it's pretty. Yeah, it's novel. But beyond some mildly entertaining PS2 candy, Fantavision doesn't offer nearly as much as other launch titles for the money. To clear up any misconceptions, Fantavision is played by chaining together colored flares the computer shoots toward the sky and detonating them before they fizzle out. Aside from saving your replays and watching them from different angles, that's all there is to the game. Technically, there's only a few controls you need to master, but I found it difficult to select a single flare from a cluster, and just as frustrating to recover if you select the wrong one. A certain breed of people might enjoy playing the game at length to get their chain combos up and witness the visually stunning particle display that follows, but it gets old fast. Because it's such a graphical showcase, a stripped-down version of Fantavision would have made a great free demo pack-in with the PS2. But hey, if you can charge \$35 for a memory card, you'd have to be nuts to pack in a free game. Rent this one if anything. **Jonathan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	5	7



Best Feature: Forgiving game play
Worst Feature: Clunky interface

Publisher: PS2
Take 2 Interactive
Developer: Ormith
Featured In: EGM #137
Players: 1-2
Supports: None
Web Site: www.take2games.com

For a pool game, Q-Ball does a whole lot to make things exciting and keep the player from losing interest too quickly. By letting you select your own cue, scenery and even music, Q-Ball re-creates the pool-hall feel nicely at home. A healthy offering of games, from 8- and 9-ball to some refreshingly unconventional diversions like bowiards (a cross between bowling and pool), takes some of the starch out of the sport. Unfortunately, it's not as comprehensive or realistic as Real Pool. I see what the developers were trying to do with this title, but unless you really have the physics and interface down, all the peripheral glitz doesn't help much. The ball's travel around the table at ridiculous speeds, encouraging sloppy play over calculated precision. Selecting the power of your shot is unnecessarily hard, as is tweaking it for spin and direction. If it weren't for Real Pool outsourcing it in a few major capacities, Q-Ball would be a more attractive option for those who want something besides another mech game for their PS2. Make Q-Ball a rental first. **Jonathan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	7	8



Real Pool



Publisher: PS2
Infogrames
Developer:
Takara Co.
Featured In:
EGM #137
Players:
1-2
Supports:
None
Web Site:
www.infogames.com

Best Feature: Realistic physics
Worst Feature: Eh, it's pool

OK, yes, we're all surprised to see two billiards games out on the PS2 so early. They're both really polished products, though, and while Q-Ball is more graphically intense, Real Pool has more realistic physics, a large library of games, and a very user-friendly interface. Putting spin on the cue ball, adjusting the power of your stroke, or simply lining up a shot can all be done with a simple, intuitive button press on the well-mapped control pad. In addition to every major pocket billiards game, Real Pool has three and four-ball carom (that's the kind without pockets, folks) games that are sickly addictive. Over two dozen odd-shaped skill tables let you test your abilities, which will likely improve in real life after playing this game (heck, mine did). My only complaint: The balls seem to roll excessively after some shots, as if purposefully lining up for the next one. That's either a development intention or my own personal insanity, but either way, it's not a big deal (well, to you all, anyway). Skip the pool hall this week and spend the extra cash on this game.

Jonathan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	8	7	9

Surfing H3O



Publisher: PS2
Rockstar Games
Developer:
ASCII Entertainment
Featured In:
EGM #137
Players: 1-2
Supports:
X-Board
Web Site:
www.rockstargames.com

Best Feature: Hopeless Records soundtrack
Worst Feature: Hopeless control

Toned down for the less-forgiving American audience, the outlandish alien-riden story line from Surfroid (H3O's Japanese counterpart) has been replaced with a pretty run-of-the-mill sports competition background. Unfortunately, Rockstar hasn't made the controls anymore forgiving, but rather kept the difficulty and fudged the responsiveness. Whether you use the included X-Board, which fits over the analog sticks to simulate the surfboard feel, or the sticks alone, navigating the waves is always a huge uphill battle that takes all the fun out of the game. The levels provide very little variety, so you feel like you're playing the same scenario over and over again with a few cosmetic environmental swaps. I thoroughly enjoyed the soundtrack though, featuring some great under-appreciated bands like Samiam, Digger and Dillinger Four—the songs became my motivation to keep playing, and while that's fine for me, it doesn't say much for the game itself. Spend a few days with H3O as a rental and try not to get board. Get it? I'm funny.

Jonathan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	9	5	5

Austin Powers/Dr. Evil



Publisher: Rockstar Games
Developer: Tarantula Studios
Featured In: EGM #134
Players: 1-2
Supports: Link Cable
Best Feature: Terrific interface
Worst Feature: Boring minigames
Web Site: www.rockstargames.com

Nine times out of 10, a Game Boy cart based on a licensed property will be a crappy, Mario-style platformer. Is that the case here? Well...yes and no. The title has its fair share of side-scrolling action, and that element of the game is just as uninspired as you'd expect. Other modes of play include a mediocre "Pac-Man"-style maze chase and linkable games of Othello and Rock, Paper, Scissors (really). Had the whole package been comprised of these minigames alone, the title would be of little value. But what gives the cart some merit is its tremendously innovative interface. The game mimics Windows, complete with tool bars, faux "Internet" options, and e-mail functions (trade message with other players via infrared link-up). You get to play with screensavers, listen to countless sound bites, watch a bit of digital video, even escape to a DOS prompt. Two (soon to be four) different versions of the game are available, offering players separate desktops to choose from: Austin's, or Dr. Evil's. Both carts are identical in construct, save for one of the minigames (Austin's platformer takes place on foot, Dr. Evil's takes place on a motor bike). If you like "fiddling" with computer applications, this is the game for you. It's fun to uncover all of the little extras, many of which make you laugh out loud. All in all, a mixed bag, but a unique experience for the Game Boy Color.

Ethan

Here's a game that's not worth the cartridge it's written on. First off, I can't believe there are two games like this that are basically the same thing (with different interfaces and a few different minigames and sound clips). Second, I can't believe there are eventually going to be four of them! The only redeeming qualities are the scratchy sound clips. Everything feels like a bad parody of what someone who's never played a video game thinks they're like. It's so slapped together that there's not really a coherent game anywhere to be found. The Mojo Maze is the only one of them I enjoyed even a little bit. It's a stinker, baby, yeah!

Chris

For "hardcore fans" who didn't think the movies were enough, there's always the grating Pokémon Gold & Silver-esque Austin Powers games, Oh Behave and Welcome to My Underground Lair! Two of four "games" that feature all kinds of cute Austin Powersisms. The Pac-Man-like Mojo Maze is perhaps the best thing on offer here, but it's flanked by a pile of other inferior time-killers. Rock, paper and scissors? Do we need to use a Game Boy for this? Kin Evil (as in Evel Knievel, get it?), which has you jump chasms on a motorcycle? Ugh. To think Rockstar would have you buy four of these. Stick with the movies and forget these exist.

Milkman

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	3	4	3

Alice in Wonderland



Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Digital Eclipse
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1
Supports: Game Boy Printer
Web Site: www.nintendo.com

Best Feature: Variety of level types
Worst Feature: Just for kids

Alice in Wonderland is what a kid's game should be. All too often, half-rate games come along that say they're for kids but they just plain suck. AIW, however, is well-made and should provide hours of fun for any youngster. The movie-inspired levels are broken up between quick side-scrolling platform bits, a sort of top-down adventure style of play and other levels where you are falling and need to avoid objects (or in a bottle going down rapids in another level). Eventually, you make your way to the queen's castle and all hell breaks loose. Stages are filled with all of the characters from the film, with text dialogue to match each of their unique styles of speaking. It even has a little art program where you can use Alice in Wonderland clip art to make scenes, which in turn can be sent to the Game Boy Printer for some sticker fun. Could it also be for an older gamer who's a fan of Disney games? You could get away with playing it, and a couple of the levels would prove to be either mildly difficult or insidiously repetitive, but overall it really is good for kids.

Shawn

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	6	7	6

Who Wants To Be A Millionaire



Publisher: THQ
Developer: Eurocom
Featured In: EGM #136
Supports: None
Players: 1-4
Web Site: www.bvinteractive.com

Best Feature: Captures the experience of the show
Worst Feature: Only 600 questions

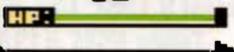
At first glance, Who Wants to be a Millionaire would appear to be an ideal title for the Game Boy Color. Its short-term play is well-suited for lunch breaks or bus rides—sitting through a full game takes only one to 20 minutes, depending on your performance. The multiple-choice interface is perfect for the console's limited button layout, and even the presentation is first-rate, incorporating video sequences and digitized speech. Unfortunately, like the PlayStation version, the game possesses one enormous flaw: There are only 600 total questions. By the second hour of play, you will notice Regis' trivia challenges repeating themselves. In rapid time, this drains the title of its replay value entirely—a real shame, given that the game is otherwise beautifully designed. The first time you play it, the essence of the popular television show is capably captured, by the 25th time you hit Start, well...have you ever watched a rerun of Millionaire that you had already caught on its first viewing? Exactly—there's just no point. Walk away...just walk away.

Ethan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	5	1

UNKNOWN

:L5



SCIZOR

:L58♠

HP: 158/186



▶ FIGHT PRTN

PACK RUN

Publisher: Nintendo
 Developer: Game Freak
 Featured In: EGM #134
 Players: 1
 Supports: Link Cable, IR Port, Printer
 Best Feature: Timespects
 Worst Feature: Repetitive battles
 Web Site: www.nintendo.com

Nintendo may have kept the same underlying gameplay for Gold and Silver, but they also made enough adjustments and improvements to make them worthy follow-ups to some of the greatest-selling games of all time. Yes, you spend most of the game watching turn-based battles rage back and forth between two cute critters. Yes, you are a young scamp out to be a great Pokémon trainer, aided by a friendly professor and hated by a jealous rival. You still find wild critters in the grass and catch them in Pokéballs, still take them to the Pokémon center to get healed, still shop for items for them at Pokémarts in almost every town. So what exactly is different? First and foremost, the games add another layer of depth by keeping track of the time and date, with certain events only occurring on certain days. It's cool to be wandering around at night and see things or people that

TAUROS

HP: 113♠



QUILAVA

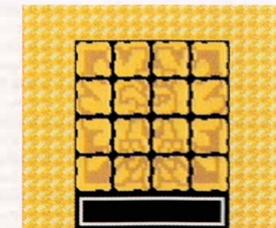
HP: 130♠

85/85



QUILAVA

used EMBER!



There are a few of these tile-sliding "puzzles" in Gold and Silver, but still nothing very challenging.

weren't there earlier in the day. Pokémon can also now equip items, which they can use to power up their attacks or heal themselves with in battle. This gets rid of you always having to waste a turn to use items yourself, and also adds another level of strategy to battles—which Pokémon will you give which items to? Overall, the interface is more refined and better organized as well: You can tell what abilities HM and TMs have without using them, and all your items are separated and stored according to type so you can get at whatever you need quickly. As in the first games, all the new Pokémon have been ingeniously designed and named, each with its own interesting quirks and backstories. Other new features, like the Pokégear cell phone and radio, really make it feel like something is always going on, and the game world is always on the move and changing, just like the real world. All in all, it's pretty safe to say that anyone who liked the first game has the next 60 or 70 hours on their GBC booked.

In addition to a whole new map, with new cities, dungeons and routes between, Gold and Silver include a slightly modified version of the entire first game. It's a huge quest, even if you don't "catch 'em all."

FUCHSIA CITY
POKÉMON GYM

If you despise all things Pokémon, I don't have the time or space here for a full argument on why you should give them a try—I'll just say they are much more than cute little kid's games. Sure there's a ton of reasons why Gold and Silver are better than the first set of Pokémon games, but admittedly they don't make enough of a difference to change anyone's mind. In other words, if you liked the first game, you'll like the sequel. If you didn't, you won't. The whole collecting—everything aspect of the game has been expanded tenfold—besides all the new creatures, there are items you get by trading Pokémon, people who only appear on certain days, Pokémon that only appear at certain times, new ways of evolving Pokémon, and enough other tiny secrets and hidden techniques to make your head spin. Needless to say, being the kid who knows everything about Pokémon just got a lot harder. My complaints are the same I had with the first game—combat is repetitive and happens way too often. Puzzles are practically nonexistent, and progress still relies mostly on "go here, talk to him, and get that." Also, if you unport your old Pokémon, the game is way too easy. Still, the graphics (including attack effects) are improved and the sound is excellent, including little Pokémon noises and catchy tunes. And since the old game is included (with a few differences) after you beat the new one, it's also a great value. **Mark**

Behind the marketing and hype that made Pikachu and friends a billion-dollar franchise, there's always been a great game. Gold and Silver take Pokémon to the next level. The thing that's different this time is that, if you want it to—it will take over your life, 24/7. It's a game that's only as deep as you want it to be. If you find yourself waking up early just to catch a Leleba, you've caught the fever. Graphics are some of the best I've seen on the GBC—a testament to how big a difference real color makes. Even if you've never touched a Pokémon game, Gold and Silver is a great place to start. Refined gameplay, new monsters, new gadgets...couldn't be better. **Chris**

I liked the original Pokémon Red and Blue as much as the next guy (well, except maybe Chris Johnston, that PokéFreak), but I gotta say I dove into my Gold and Silver review with a certain amount of dread. After all, I'd collected a couple hundred Pokémon before, and doing it all over again, going through another thousand button-mashing battles, seemed like a chore. But Game Freak packed Gold and Silver with so much new stuff—more subquests, real-time gameplay, tons of perks for trading with others, red-hot PokéSex—that I can overlook the same old, same old drudgework. This is the only Game Boy game you'll need for a long, long time. **Chris**

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

9 9 8 7



Review Archive

EGM's Last 154 Reviews From EGM #134 - 137

Game	Publisher	Best Feature	Worst Feature	Scores	Issue #
Dreamcast					
Aerowings 2	Crave Entertainment	You Can Shoot Stuff Now	You Don't Get Any Air-To-Ground Missions	4.0	134
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes	Midway	Four-Player Deathmatch Mode	Unresponsive Controls	4.0	137
Bust-A-Move 4	Acclaim	Addictive Gameplay	Sickeningly Cute	8.0	134
Cannon Spike	Capcom	Old-School Gameplay	Levels Too Short	6.0 6.5 6.0	135
D2	Sega	Creepy Story Line	Tedious Gameplay	5.5 7.0 6.5	136
Ecco the Dolphin: Defender of Future	Sega	Gorgeous Graphics And Sound	Tough Learning Curve	9.0 9.5 6.0	135
F355 Challenge: Passione Rossa	Acclaim	Amazingly Realistic Graphics	Steep Learning Curve	7.5 7.0 6.5	137
Gunbird 2	Capcom	Old-School Shootin' Fun	Often Can't Avoid Death	7.0 7.5 5.0	135
Hidden and Dangerous	Talonsport	Easier Than Rainbow Six	Stupid Team AI	5.5	136
NFL 2K1	Sega Sports	Online Play	Online Mid-Game Quitters	10 9.5 9.5	137
NFL Blitz 2001	Midway	New Minigames	Too Much Loading	7.0 8.0 7.0	137
NFL Quarterback Club 2001	Acclaim	Amazing Graphics	Sound O'r Controls, It's A Toss-Up	5.0 5.0 2.0	137
Power Stone 2	Capcom	Awesome Environments	Can Be Confusing With Four Players	9.0 8.5 8.5	134
Railroad Tycoon II	Gathering of Developers	Strategic Depth Online Play	Joypad A Little Too Cumbersome	7.0	135
Ring, The	Infogrames	Detailed Environments	Sound Or Controls, It's A Toss-Up	3.0 6.0 5.0	134
San Francisco Rush 2049	Midway	Battle Mode	Mostly Just The Same Ol' Rush	6.0	135
Seaman	Sega	Deadpan Humor, Opinions On Life	Little Loose On Voice Recognition	8.5 6.5 9.0	134
Sega GT	Sega	Fine-Tune Every Car	Game Feels Dated	8.0 7.0 6.5	136
Silver	Infogrames	Story Line, Voice-Overs	Battle System	7.0 6.0 7.0	134
Sno-Cross Championship Racing	Crave Entertainment	Smooth Graphics	Gameplay Feels Unbalanced	7.0	137
South Park Rally	Acclaim	Graphics, Tons Of SP Characters	Pretty Much Everything Else	3.0	134
Spawn	Capcom	Lots Of Unlockable Players	Camera Angles Are Problematic	8.0	136
Street Fighter II: Double Impact	Capcom	Smooth Animation	No 3rd Strike	7.0 9.0 8.0	134
Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike	Capcom	Arcade-Perfect Gameplay	Missing Combos From Second Impact	8.0 7.0 8.5	137
Sydney 2000	Eidos Interactive	Good Staple Of Events	Subpar Graphics	5.0 5.0 4.5	136
Test Drive V-Rally	Infogrames	Track Editor	Some Slowdown	8.5 9.0 7.5	135
Tokyo Xtreme Racer 2	Crave Entertainment	Cool Car Customization Options	No Two-Player Mode	8.5 8.0 7.5	137
Toy Story 2	Activision	Standard Disney 3D Platform Game	Exact Same Game From Six Months Ago	5.0	134
Ultimate Fighting Championship	Crave Entertainment	Realistic Graphics	High Frustration Level	6.0 7.0 7.0	136
Virtua Athlete 2000	Agetec	Plays Just Like Decathlete	Only Seven Events	6.0 6.0 5.0	136
Virtua Tennis	Sega Sports	Awesome Graphics And Animation	Limited Replay Value	7.5 8.0 9.5	134
Wacky Races	Infogrames	Cel-Shaded Graphics	Gets Too Hard	7.0 6.5 7.5	134
WOW Magical Racing	Eidos Interactive	Fanciful Music And Graphics	Too Tough For Kiddie Theme	5.5	135
World Series Baseball 2K1	Sega Sports	Graphics	No Fielding	3.0 5.0 2.5	135
WWF Royal Rumble	THQ	Nine Wrestlers On Screen At Once!	Not Enough Modes And Ojtions	5.5 4.0 5.5	135
Nintendo 64					
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 2	3DO	Variety Of Weapons, And The Music	Touchy Control	4.0 4.0 4.0	135
Fighter Destiny 2	South Peak	Unique Point Scoring System	Unresponsive Control	3.0	134
Hercules: The Legendary Journeys	Titus	Greek Mythology Is Fun	Straight-Up Zelda Rip-Off	3.5	137
Indy Racing 2000	Infogrames	Fast And Fun Racing Gameplay	The Graphics Are Slightly Blurry	8.0	134
Kirby 64: The Crystal Shards	Nintendo	Old-School 2D Gameplay In 3D	None	9.0 7.5 8.5	134
Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask, The	Nintendo	New Transformations For Link	Time Limits Can Become Frustrating	10 10 10	137
Madden NFL 2001	EA Sports	Sharp And Smooth Graphics	Madden/Summeral Commentary	9.0	135
Mario Tennis	Nintendo	Doubles Action	Losing At Multiplayer	9.5 9.0 8.5	135
Mega Man 64	Capcom	Tons Of Ouests	Control Just Doesn't Feel Right	5.5	137
Ms. Pac-Man Maze Madness	Namco	Very Deep	Requires Plenty Of Patience	8.5 8.0 8.0	137
NFL Quarterback Club 2001	Acclaim	Relive Past Super Bowl Moments	Framerate	2.5	137
Ogre Battle 64	Atlus	Awesome Strategy RPG Action	May Be Too Deep For Casual Gamers	7.5 8.5 9.0	136
Pokémon Puzzle League	Nintendo	Best Versus Puzzle Ever	Amazing And Repetitive Voices	9.0 9.0 9.5	137
Rally Challenge 2000	South Peak	Race Options	Graphics, Especially In Multiplayer Modes	3.5	134
San Francisco Rush 2049	Midway	Tons Of Shortcuts And Stuff To Collect	Slippy Graphics In Spots	8.5	137
StarCraft 64	Nintendo	Best RTS Console Controls Ever	Slowdown	9.0 8.0 7.5	134

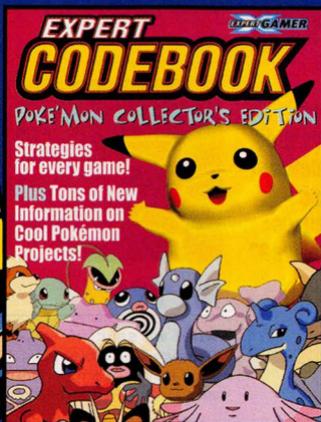
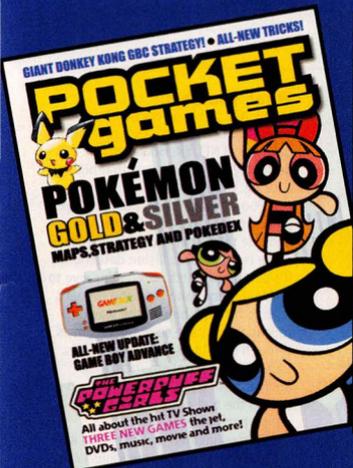
Game	Publisher	Best Feature	Worst Feature	Scores	Issue #
Turok 3	Acclaim	Graphics In High Resolution Mode	Short Play Length	8.0 8.5 8.0	136
World Is Not Enough, The	Electronic Arts	Classic GoldenEye-Style Gameplay	A Few Confusing Mission Goals	9.5 8.5 9.5	137
PlayStation					
Action Bass	Take 2 Interactive	It Only Costs 10 Bucks	It's Not Worth Much More Than That	4.5	135
Alien Resurrection	Fox Interactive	Scary As Hell Atmosphere	Frustratingly Difficult	8.0 5.5 5.5	136
Army Men: Air Attack 2	3DO	A Decent Army Men Game For Once	Restrictive Camera Angle	7.0	137
ATV: Quad Power Racing	Acclaim	Great Physics	Tracks Are Too Long	6.0	137
Blaster Master Blasting Again	Sunsoft	Fun Like The NES Game	Music High On The Cheese Factor	6.5	137
Bomberman Party Edition	Vatical Entertainment	It's Bomberman	The Throw-Away Single-Player Mode	7.5	137
Breakout	Hasbro Interactive	Inventive Levels	Over Too Soon	8.0	137
Chrono Cross	Square EA	Stunning Music	The Game Ends	9.5 10 10	134
Crash Bash	Sony CEA	Lots Of Crash Characters	Sleep-Inducing Minigames	5.0 6.0 7.0	137
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX	Acclaim	Massive Variety Of Tricks	Sluggish Game Engine	7.5 7.5 7.0	137
Destruction Derby Raw	Midway	Great Vehicle Control	A Touch Of Slowdown	8.0 7.5 6.5	136
DinoCrisis 2	Capcom	New Style Of Gameplay	A Little Too "Arcadey" At Times	8.5 9.0 9.0	136
Dragon Valor	Namco	Good Controls	Boring Levels	6.0 4.5 4.5	136
Family Feud	Hasbro Interactive	Only Takes 20 Minutes of Your Life	Virtual Louie	2.5	137
Final Fantasy IX	Square EA	Awesome Graphics And Music	The Card Game Is Boring	10 9.5 9.5	137
Flintstones Bedrock Bowling	South Peak	The Official Voice Actors Do The Lines	It's Not Bowling, Why, God, Why?	0.5	135
Frogger 2: Swampy's Revenge	Hasbro Interactive	Improved Single-Player Gameplay	Boring Multiplayer Modes	7.0 4.0 5.0	137
Galaga	Hasbro Interactive	Classic Galaga Music	Plays Nothing Like The Original	4.0	137
Hogs of War	Infogrames	It's Like Worms In 3D	Difficult To Aim Weapons In 3D	7.0	136
Incredible Crisis	Titus	It's So Crazy!	Too Strange For U.S. Audiences?	7.0	136
Jarrett & Labonte Stock Car Racing	Codemasters	Excellent Driving Physics	Totally Misleading License	9.0 8.5 8.5	136
Jeopardy! 2	Hasbro Interactive	Great Selection Of Categories	That Barn Text Parser	5.5	137
Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000	Acclaim	Many Tracks	Tracks Are Pretty Much The Same-All Dirt	3.5	136
Madden NFL 2001	EA Sports	Madden Cards	Madden Opening His Mouth	9.5 9.0 9.5	135
Medal of Honor: Underground	Electronic Arts	More Intense Than The Original	Same Ol' Bland Visuals	8.0 7.5 7.5	137
Mega Man Legends 2	Capcom	New Lock-On Feature	Blocky Graphics	7.5 7.5 8.5	137
Mike Tyson Boxing	Codemasters	Nice Character Models	Unbalanced Gameplay	5.5 4.5 6.0	137
Mortal Kombat: Special Forces	Midway	Beat Guys Up!	The Whole Game Is Half-@#\$ed	1.5	135
Ms. Pac-Man Maze Madness	Namco	Lots Of Depth	Requires Plenty Of Patience	8.5	137
MTV Sports: Pure Ride	THQ	Smooth Rider Animation	Sloppy Collision Detection	6.0 6.0 2.5	137
MTV Sports: Skate-Andy MacDonald	THQ	Loads Of Levels	Unresponsive Control	1.5 2.0 3.5	137
Muppet Monster Adventure	Midway	Gameplay Is Surprisingly Solid	It's Easy To See This Was Made For Kids	7.0	137
Muppet Race Mania	Midway	Loaded With Character	Incredibly Sloppy Control	6.0	137
NASCAR 2001	EA Sports	Licensed Drivers & Tracks Incl. Daytona	Car Control	6.0	136
NBA Live 2001	EA Sports	In-Game Challenges	Still Choppy	7.0 8.0 7.5	137
NBA ShootOut 2001	989 Sports	Create A Funky Dunk	Visuals	4.5 6.5 6.5	137
NCAA GameBreaker 2001	989 Sports	Keith Jackson	Suspect AI	7.0 7.5 7.0	135
NFL Blitz 2001	Midway	Still Plays Like Blitz	Well, It Still Plays Like Blitz!	6.5	137
NFL GameDay 2001	989 Sports	Tackles Animations	AI Could Still Be Better	6.5 7.0 7.5	135
NHL 2001	EA Sports	Rebounds	Framerate	6.0	137
NHL FaceOff 2001	989 Sports	Balanced Gameplay	No Franchise	8.5 8.0 7.5	136
Parasite Eve II	Square EA	Resident Evil-Style Gameplay	Tedious Puzzles	8.0 8.0 8.5	135
Polaris SnoCross	Vatical Entertainment	The Price	The Monotony	2.5	136
Pro Pinball: Fantastic Journey	Empire Interactive	The Price	There's Only One Table	7.5	135
RayCrisis	Working Designs/Spaz	Old-School Shooting Action	No Two-Player Mode	8.0 6.0 7.0	136
RC Revenge	Acclaim	A Track Editor	A Track Editor w/ Limited Memory=Worthless	4.0	136
Resident Evil: Survivor	Capcom	Semi-Interesting Story	...Where Should We Start?	3.5 5.0 4.0	136
Samurai Shodown: Warrior's Rage	SNK	You Can Turn It Off	For SNK's Last U.S. Effort, It Blows	2.0	135
Sno-Cross Championship Racing	Crave Entertainment	Realistic Gameplay	Realistic Gameplay	5.0 5.0 5.0	136
Spider-Man	Activision	Swinging Around As Spidey	Camera In Enclosed Areas	8.0 8.5 7.0	135



Review Archive

Game	Publisher	Best Feature	Worst Feature	Scores	Issue #
■ Spin Jam	Take 2 Interactive	Addicting Arcade-Like Gameplay	The Cuteness Of The Characters	8.0	136
■ Spyro: Year of the Dragon	Sony CE A	Solid Gameplay	Still Too Freaking Cute	9.0 7.5 8.0	137
■ Star Trek: Invasion	Activision	Mission Variety	Extreme Difficulty	8.0 8.0 9.0	136
Sydney 2000	Eidos Interactive	Lots Of Events	Crappy And Sluggish Graphics	4.0	136
Team Buddies	Midway	RTS Action On PS	Sometimes Confusing Interface	7.0 7.0 7.0	136
Tenchu 2: Birth of the Stealth Assassin	Activision	Day And Night Missions	Camera, Sluggish Control	7.0 7.5 6.5	135
▲ Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	Activision	The New Manual Move	Long Character-Select Load Times	10 10 10	136
Tyco RC	Matt	It's Got The Actual Tyco RC Vehicles	Bumping Into Walls Hurts Bad	3.0	136
Vampire Hunter D	Jaleco	Slick Anime Styling	Frustrating Controls	4.0 4.5 4.5	135
Wheel of Fortune 2	Hasbro Interactive	Easy Play Mechanics	Waiting Forever For A Turn	7.0	137
PlayStation 2					
Armored Core 2	Agetec	Fully Customizable Robots	Frustrating Controls	6.0 5.5 6.0	137
Dynasty Warriors 2	Koei	Consistent Action	Repetitive Gameplay	7.5 6.5 6.0	136
Eternal Ring	Agetec	Making Magic Rings	Simplistic Combat	6.0 3.5 7.0	136
Evergrace	Agetec	Lots Of Weapons And Outfit Options	Obnoxious Load Times	6.5 5.5 7.5	137
Gungriffon Blaze	Working Designs	Intense Gameplay	Not Enough Missions	7.0 6.5 7.0	137
Kessen	Electronic Arts	Smooth And Pretty	Rather Lengthy Battles	7.5	137
● Madden NFL 2001	EA Sports	Oh, Those Wonderful Graphics	More Sluggish Than PS1 Version	9.0 9.0 9.0	136
● Midnight Club	Rockstar	Huge Playing Fields	A Tad Too Difficult At Times	9.0 8.5 7.0	137
● NHL 2001	EA Sports	Realism	Slight Slowdown	9.0 9.5 10	137
● Ridge Racer V	Namco	Excellent Control	All That Fog In Multiplayer	9.5 9.0 8.5	136
Silent Scope	Konami	Cool Sniping Action	Over Too Quickly	6.5 7.0 7.5	137
Smuggler's Run	Rockstar Games	Huge, Open Terrain To Navigate	Cops Swarm You Relentlessly	8.0 8.5 6.5	137
Swing Away Golf	Electronic Arts	Story Mode	Goofy Caddies	7.5 8.0 6.5	136
● SSX	EA Sports	Great Overall Presentation	Little Bit Of Slowdown	9.5 9.0 8.5	136
Street Fighter EX3	Capcom	Curbed Slowdown In U.S. Release	Where's The One-On-One Mode?	6.5 7.5 6.0	137
Summoner	THQ	Yest, Well-Designed Levels	Bland Characters And Gameplay	6.0 4.0 4.5	137
Tekken Tag Tournament	Namco	Shiny Happy Tekken 3	Nothing New, Really	8.0 7.0 8.0	137
Wild Wild Racing	Interplay	Detailed Car Models	Frameate Is A Little Slow	6.5	137
X-Squad	Electronic Arts	Cool Weapons	No Multiplayer	6.5 7.5 6.0	137
Game Boy/Game Boy Color					
19 42	Capcom	Old-School Vertical Shootin'	Horrible, Horrible "Music"	5.5	134
All-Star Baseball 2001	Acclaim	Simple, Yet Still Fun	No Multiplayer	6.5	134
Animorphs	Ubi Soft	True To The Kid's Books	Nice Fighting Aliens	5.0	136
Buffy the Vampire Slayer	THQ	Keeps The Buffy Humor Intact	Terribly Boring Levels And Battles	2.5	137
Crysalis	Nintendo	Graphics	Aggravating Play Mechanics	6.5 7.5 6.5	134
Dragon's Lair	Capcom	Almost An Exact Port Of The Original	Almost An Exact Port Of The Original	6.5	137
■ Dragon Warrior II	Enix	Two RPGs For The Price Of One	Games Feel Slightly Dated	9.5 8.5 7.0	135
■ Frogger 2	Majesco	Classic Frogger Gameplay	Questionable Maze Design	8.0	135
Galaga	Majesco	It's Portable Galaga	Can't See Incoming Attacks	7.0	135
Metal Walker	Capcom	Unique Battle System	Battles Every Two Steps!	8.0 5.5 7.0	137
Monster Rancher Explorer	Tecmo	Simple Gameplay	Stiff Control And Boring Puzzles	5.5	136
Perfect Dark	Rare	Gameplay Variety	Idiotic Guards	5.5 5.5 5.0	135
O*Bert	Majesco	Just Like Arcade	Controls Are A Bit Tough	5.0	135
■ Road Rash	Electronic Arts	Awesome Scaling Effect	All Of The Tracks Look Very Similar	8.0	137
San Francisco Rush 2049	Midway	Its Natural RC Pro Am Style Of Play	It's Just Too Darned Short	7.0	137
Spider-Man	Activision	Looks Really Good For A GBC Game	Far Too Difficult For The Youngins	7.5	135
Test Drive Cycles	Infogrames	Pseudo Scaling	Simple, Sloppy Control	3.5	136
Test Drive Le Mans	Infogrames	Loads Of Cars, Tracks And Features	Frustrating Control	3.0	135
Turok 3	Acclaim	Vehicle Type Of Gameplay	Trusting Levels	3.0	136
■ Wacky Races	Infogrames	Smooth 3D Scrolling On The GBC	The Whole Experience Is Far Too Brief	8.0	134
■ Warlockd	Nintendo	Those Wizards	Troops Get Lost Too Easily	9.0 8.5 8.5	135
X-Men: Mutant Academy	Activision	Graphics	Way Way Way Too Simple	2.0	134

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PS2



Reader Reviews

NBA Live 2001

What we said:

"It looks pretty much the same as last year...hang on to 2000 and save up for the PS2...unchanged from last year."

How we rated it:

7.0 **8.0** **7.5**

What you said:

NBA Live has always been the dominant basketball franchise and nothing could touch it. Well, nothing much has changed. The game is a solid work of programming with many improvements over previous releases. The animation is much smoother and the graphics are a bit more realistic. It includes some nifty features such as the "challenge," but for those of us who just like realism it is still the game to beat. The AI is excellent and provides a competitive game. The only thing that bothers the crap out of me is why the console version did not get a deeper franchise mode. I mean, Madden and all the other EA games have players getting older, retiring, getting better/worse, becoming free agents, a draft mode, etc. Why can't they implement these features into Live? I guess rookie faces are the problem, but couldn't they have implemented a random face generator that uses the already available feature in the game? **I hate to say this, but I will give ShootOut 2001 a try (due to the draft mode)** and I may switch over until Live gets its act straight. I mean, playing up to 10 seasons is great—but only if your players age/mature realistically and you can draft rookies! Also: INCREASE INJURIES GOD DAMN IT!!!!

Brothers Marens
dethangelz@hotmail.com



"Why can't they implement these features into Live?"



NFL 2K1

What we said:

"The gameplay is gridiron action at its finest...the passing game is much tighter and precise...this is a must-have."

How we rated it:

10 **9.5** **9.5**

What you said:

I think NFL 2K1 is a very good game. I bought the Dreamcast for the sole purpose of NFL 2K. However, NFL 2K1 definitely did not deserve that high of a rating. Here's why:

- 1.) Poor collision detection...! I have played a boat load of NFL 2K1 games and one thing that is certain in each game is the poor collision detection. It's painful to watch a defender dive to tackle a runner and have the runner's legs go through him on the way to a touchdown. I have seen the ball pass through shoulders, arms and hands.
- 2.) No intentional grounding. So many times I go to sack the QB and he throws the ball away in the pocket right when I hit him.
- 3.) Butter-fingered receivers (Pro & AllPro). When I play as the Rams I can

The World Is Not Enough

What we said:

"...sure to please most every console FPS fan...definitely a worthy successor...Bond's arsenal of kick-ass guns easily rivals Joanna Dark's..."

How we rated it:

9.5 **8.5** **9.5**

What you said:

Can a Bond game be good without Rare backing it up? Absolutely. While Tomorrow Never Dies for the PlayStation was dismal at best, TWINE blows it out of the water. **Is it better than GoldenEye? Well...almost.** TWINE has a few flaws that are rather hard to overlook. I found several glitches in the animation, one of which not only made a terrorist run in place, but also allowed me to empty the ammo from all of my weapons into him...without doing any damage. Unacceptable. I also noticed



that the graphics weren't as clear as the other Nintendo Bond we all know and love (which isn't a huge deal, but I noticed the Review Crew gave it a "9" for visuals, which rather mystified me). I would've also liked to be able to take away the text that pops up every time there's a conversation. On the bright side, though, the game follows the movie's plot faithfully, and the music brings you into the world of danger and intrigue that is 007. The voice acting is surprisingly good, almost on par with

Rare's Perfect Dark. Lastly...it's just fun. Yes, maybe some missions could've been less "You-have-to-see-the-movie-otherwise-you're-screwed," but you won't mind. As for the game...it has its flaws, but nothing that detracts too much from the gameplay. So, if you're a fan of GoldenEye, you might want to rent before you buy, just to see if you like TWINE's style. But for first-time players, it's worth your cash. Play it with a martini shaken, not stirred.

Peter Jurmu
zell@gamersarmy.com

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go 27-30 on passing. When I play as any other team I am lucky to hit 50% for completions. Part of this is due to the ball passing through the arms of the receivers and invisible barriers (see #4).
4.) Invisible wall. Sometimes the ball bounces off an invisible barrier before it gets to a receiver.

5.) Great but quirky audio. If a player gets injured then EVERY TIME a team scores, the announcer says, "[name] was injured and we'll get a report on his condition soon" or something to that effect. When I get 4th down on the opponent's 20-30-yard line they say I should punt instead of kick a field goal. Also, I was up by three touchdowns and the other team just got the ball and the announcer says they could drive for the winning touchdown. He failed to mention that they would have to do that three times.

6.) Once-in-a-lifetime strange occurrences. This is NO JOKE. It happened only once but I thought it was funny enough to mention here. I was playing as the Rams (against the Bucs) when Kurt Warner threw an "Interception." The Bucs' defender caught the ball and then turned around and ran to the WRONG endzone. I was thinking, "I am going to get a safety out of this!" Once the defender reached the endzone he dropped the ball and the announcer said the pass was incomplete. These are the reasons I wish I could save instant replays. Thanks for listening.

Lee Venable
La Vista, NE



What you said:

People who like first-person shooters should love Perfect Dark. I think it is the PERFECT game. Of course, it has its jaggies and all, but it is an awesome first-person shooter. **The story is great, and the graphics are the best possible for the N64**, considering the limitations. If the franchise was turned over to the PlayStation instead, the game would look a lot better, but the loading time would not. Even if Medal of Honor came out for the Nintendo system, it would not, and could not compare to Rare's Perfect Dark. Even though the limitations of the Nintendo 64 are a problem, the framerate is still smooth as a "baby's bottom." All together, I give Perfect Dark the big 1-of 1. Campbell
Address Withheld

"game" with no interactivity **WHAT-SOEVER. It's a retarded "pet simulation" for losers with absolutely no taste in games or those lacking any-thing resembling a life.** Mere words cannot articulate my anger toward this product (I turned in the great MvC2 and Vanguard Bandits for it.....) and I wish you could see the look on my face as I type this. This "game" is a pile that you should avoid at ANY cost.

Nappa 195
nappa195@earthlink.net

Turok 3



What we said:

"Multiplayer moves at a smoother framerate than Perfect Dark..."

How we rated it:

8.0 **8.5** **8.0**

What you said:

The first thing I thought when I played this game was, "Wow, awesome graphics!" This game runs smooth as silk. Also, the levels are still as huge as Turok 2, but you now have a "save anywhere" feature (big cheer!). You can play as two different characters, with branching story lines and different abilities too. **But the game is waaaayyy too short.** I managed to finish it with six

"Mere words cannot articulate my anger toward this product..."



Perfect Dark



What we said:

"This game is absolutely gorgeous... masterpiece...I was hooked."

How we rated it:

10 **9.5** **10**

Seaman



What we said:

"This is the coolest game ever made... bizarre...there's often nothing to do..."

How we rated it:

8.5 **6.5** **9.0**

What you said:

Hmmm...I really love games that you don't play. Hell, this isn't even a crappy "interactive experience" like MGS or FFB. Oh no, it's far worse. Imagine a



hours. That's unacceptable. In conclusion, if you can overlook the length of this game, pick this one up.

Justin Second
Elliot Lake, Ontario, Canada



Tricks of the Trade

By Trickman Terry
tricks@ziffdavis.com

TRICK OF THE MONTH

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

(For PlayStation)

Unlock Everything

From the Main Menu Screen, access Career Mode and choose to continue a career or start a new one. On the Select Player Screen, choose a character and begin your game. In the middle of play, press START to pause the game and then press and hold the L1 button. While holding this button, press X, X, X, Square, Triangle, Up, Down, Left, Up, Square, Triangle, X, Triangle, Circle, X, Triangle, Circle. The screen will shake when entered correctly. Select the End Run option after entering the code, and you will have access to all the cheats in the game!

Mike Peresluka
Winnipeg, Manitoba,
Canada



F355 Challenge: Passione Rossa

FIVE HIDDEN TRACKS

On the Main Menu Screen, access the Options. On the Options Screen, press and hold X+Y. You will see a Password option appear above Exit. Keep holding X+Y, move down and access the Password option by pressing the A button. Now you may enter any of these passwords to unlock the courses as shown (Note: The passwords are case sensitive).

Fiorano Track

CinqueValvole

Nurburgring Track

LiebeFrauMilch

Laguna-Seca Track

Stars&Stripes

Sepang Track

Kualalumpur

Atlanta Track

DaysOfThunder

Hidden & Dangerous

TONS OF CHEATS

(Important Note: You need a Dreamcast keyboard plugged into port B on the Dreamcast to make these codes work.) First, choose "Start Game" from the Main Menu Screen and when asked to enter your name, type IWILLCHEAT on the Dreamcast keyboard and press the Enter key. Next, go through the setup process by choosing your mission, men, team and weapons. In the game, type in these codes on the DC keyboard for the results as shown. You will hear a click sound when a code is entered correctly.

Level Skip

Type in MISSIONOVER on the DC keyboard.

Restore Health

Type in GOODHEALTH on the DC keyboard.

Invincibility

Type in CANTDIE on the DC keyboard (Note: Explosions and trains can still hurt or kill you).

All Doors In Mission Open

Type in OPENALDOOR on the DC keyboard.

Instant Death

Type in KILLTHEMALL on the DC keyboard (Note: Use caution with this trick as it kills hostages as well).



Player Coordinates Displayed

Type in PLAYERCOORDS on the DC keyboard.

All Weapons and Items

Type in ALLOOT on the DC keyboard.

Enemy View--Front

Type in ENEMYF on the DC keyboard. This will give you a view behind the nearest enemy. Keep typing it again and again to cycle forward through the next nearest enemies.

Enemy View--Backward

Type in ENEMYB on the DC keyboard. This will cycle backward through the enemies.

Huge Heads

Type in FUNNYHEAD on the DC keyboard.

Debug Frame

Type in DEBUGDRAWWIRE on the DC keyboard. This puts a strange debug picture box on the screen.

Fail Mission

Type in GAMEFAIL on the DC keyboard.

The End

Type in SHOWTHEEND on the DC keyboard. This gives you the ending of the game and credits.

Samba De Amigo

TWO NEW MODES

On the Main Menu Screen, choose either Arcade or Original. On the Mode Select Screen (with Hard, Normal and Easy difficulty), use the left maraca or the D-pad on your controller to access two new modes.

Random

Using the left maraca, or the D-pad, hold Down until "Random" appears in the middle of the screen.

1 Super Hard

Using the left maraca, or the D-pad, hold Up until "Super Hard" appears in the middle of the screen.

San Francisco Rush 2049

TRICKY CHEATS

On the Main Menu Screen, move down and highlight "Options." Then press the L-Trigger+R-Trigger+X+Y buttons simultaneously. Keep doing this until you see a new option called "Cheats" appear at the bottom of the menu. Access this new option to get a list of all the cheats you can unlock with



these codes as shown. (Note: The codes shown are very difficult to enter. The timing is tricky, you must enter them VERY quickly and you may need to try them several times before they will appear.)

4 All Cars

Highlight All Cars. Press A, A, Y, Y, L-Trigger, L-Trigger. Hold R-Trigger+X. Release all buttons. Hold L-Trigger+A.

Random Weapons

Highlight Random Weapons. Press and hold L-Trigger+A. While holding these, press X, Y. Release all buttons. Press and hold R-Trigger+A. While holding these, press X, Y.

Invisible Track

Highlight Invisible Track. Press R-Trigger, L-Trigger, Y, X, A, A, X, Y. Then press and hold L-Trigger+R-Trigger. While holding these, press A.

Mass

Highlight Mass. Press and hold A. While holding this button, press X, X, Y. Release the A button. Press L-Trigger, R-Trigger.

Brakes

Highlight Brakes. Press Y, Y, Y, then press and hold L-Trigger+R-Trigger+A+X.

Demolition Battle

Highlight Demolition Battle. Press and hold the L-Trigger+A. While holding these, press Y, X. Release all buttons. Press and hold R-Trigger+A. While holding these, press Y, X. All weapons in battle mode will be the battering ram.

Super Tires

Highlight Super Tires. Press and hold the R-Trigger. While holding this, press X, X, X. Release the R-Trigger. Press and hold the L-Trigger. While holding it, press A, A, Y.

There are many more codes to unlock, so send them in!

Star Wars Episode 1: Jedi Power Battles

5 JEDI POWER BATTLE MODE

On the Main Menu Screen, choose New Game and start a two-player game. In the middle of play, take controller 1 and press and hold R-Trigger+X+Y+B. With these held, press A. You will turn on Jedi Power Battle,



which allows you to do damage to your teammate. If you want to turn it off, just do the same trick again.

Street Fighter III: Third Strike

SWITCH RESOLUTIONS

Load up the game and then press and hold the following buttons until the Capcom logo appears to get different screen resolutions.

6 De-Interlaced Mode

Press and hold L-Trigger+Start button.

Low Resolution

Press and hold Y button+Start button.

Regular Screen

Press and hold X button+Start button.

NFL Blitz 2001

TODAY'S CONTEST CODES

When the "Today's Contest" screen appears, enter codes with the Turbo, Jump and Pass buttons. Press the buttons the number of times shown below, and then press the D-pad in the direction indicated to complete the code. (For example, if the code is 3, 4, 5, Right, you will press Turbo three times, Jump four times, Pass five times and then press Right on the D-pad).

Infinite Turbo

5, 1, 4, Up

Super Blitzing

0, 4, 5, Up

Super Field Goals

1, 2, 3, Left



No Interceptions

3, 4, 4, Up

No First Downs

2, 1, 0, Up

No Punting

1, 5, 1, Up

Allow Stepping out of Bounds

2, 1, 1, Left

Lights Out

5, 3, 4, Down

Invisible

4, 3, 3, Up

Big Football

0, 5, 0, Right

Big Head

2, 0, 0, Right

Huge Head

0, 4, 0, Up

No Head

3, 2, 1, Left

Headless Team

1, 2, 3, Right

Team Tiny Players

3, 1, 0, Right

Team Big Heads

2, 0, 3, Right

No CPU Assistance (2P must agree)

0, 1, 2, Down

Smart CPU Opponent (1P game only)

3, 1, 4, Down

Tournament Mode (2P game only)

1, 1, 1, Down



Always Quarterback (2P teammate required)

2, 2, 2, Left

Always Receiver (2P teammate required)

2, 2, 2, Right

Baseball Stadium

5, 0, 2, Left

Old Snow Stadium

5, 0, 3, Up

Grass Field

3, 0, 0, Up

7 Asphalt Field

3, 0, 1, Up

Dirt Field

2, 0, 2, Up

Astroturf Field

3, 0, 3, Up

Snow Field

3, 0, 4, Up

Fog On

0, 3, 0, Down

Pokémon Puzzle League

MORE DIFFICULTIES, TRAINERS, ETC.

V-Hard and S-Hard Difficulty Levels

In the Puzzle Village, choose 1P Stadium and then pick your name or guest at the Name Select Screen. On the Game



TRICKS

TOP 10 TRICKS

The top 10 games of the last month given the full-on *Trickman* treatment:

1. Star Wars Episode 1: Racer

Debug Trick

Go to an empty game file and push the A button. This will bring you to the screen where you would normally enter your initials. While in this screen, hold down the Z button and use the L-Shoulder button to type in RRRANGENT. Now scroll over to the "End" option while still holding Z and hit the L-Shoulder button once more. At this point nothing will happen. Now, while still holding Z, push the B button to exit the screen and then push A to bring you back into the initials screen. Now, while holding Z and using L-Shoulder button, type in ABA-CUS. Scroll over to the "End" option and while holding Z, push L. It should say, "OK." Now begin any saved game and start a race. While in the race, pause the game. While on the "Pause" Menu push Left, Down, Right, Up. The "Game Cheats" option should appear. From this screen you should be able to toggle invincibility, AI speed, Intelligence, Mirror Mode and Edit Vehicle Stats!

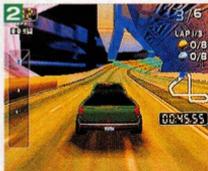
2. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater

Cool Codes

Enter the following cheat while paused during play. If you entered these correctly, the screen will shake.

Blowout Trick

This trick will blow open the game and give you a new character. From the menu, access Career Mode. Begin a new game and press START to pause. Press and hold the L1 button and enter Circle, Right, Up, Down, Circle, Right, Up, Square, Triangle. The screen shakes if entered correctly Go to the Main Menu Screen. Choose to continue the Career Mode and Officer Dick, all tapes, levels, medals, stats and FMV movies will become available.



Settings Screen, press and hold the Z button and then press L-Shift, L-Shift, A, B. The V-Hard difficulty level will appear underneath the others. To get S-Hard difficulty, hold Z button and press R-Shift, L-Shift, A, B. Now you have two entirely new levels of challenge in the game!

Trainer Taunts

In a 2P game, the first one to select his/her character can press the A button repeatedly to keep taunting your opponent until he picks his character.

1. Unlock Tricks

On the "Select Trainer" screen, press and hold L-Shift+R-Shift+Z simultaneously on controllers one and two. The question marks will then go away and the characters will be revealed.

Hidden Mewtwo Stage

Start a 2P game. On the "Select Trainer" Screen, press and hold Z. While holding this button, press B, Up, L-Shift, B, A, Start, A, Up, R-Shift (To help you remember the code, it spells BULBASUR). Mewtwo's stage will automatically appear. Player 1 will be Ash and Player 2 will be Mewtwo.

Level 99 Speed Marathon

On the Title Screen, press and hold Z. While holding this button, press B, A, L-Shift, L-Shift. You will hear a sound. Choose Marathon in Puzzle Village and on the Game Settings Screen, you will see that you can set the speed level to 99!



San Francisco Rush 2049

SECRET CODES

On the Main Menu Screen, move down and highlight "Options." Then press the L-Shift+R-Shift+C-Up+C-Right+Z buttons simultaneously. Keep doing this until you see a new option called "Cheats" appear at the bottom of the menu. Access this new option to get a list of all the cheats you can unlock with these codes as shown. (Note: The timing is tricky, you must enter them VERY quickly and you may need to try them several times before they will appear.)

All Parts

Highlight All Parts. Press and hold L-Shift+R-Shift. While holding these, press Z. Release all buttons. Press C-Down, C-Up, C-Left, C-Right. Press and hold L-Shift+R-Shift. While holding these, press Z.

Super Tires

Highlight Super Tires. Press Z, Z, L-Shift, R-Shift, C-Up, C-Up, C-Left, C-Right, C-Down.

Invincible

Highlight Invincible. Press C-Right, L-Shift, R-Shift, R-Shift, L-Shift. Press and hold C-Left+C-Down. While holding these, press Z.

All Cars

Highlight All Cars. Press C-Left, C-Left, C-Left, C-Up, C-Up, C-Up, C-Right, C-Right, C-Right, C-Down, C-Down, C-Down. Press and hold L-Shift+R-Shift+C-Left+C-Up+C-Right+C-Down. With these held, press Z.

Invisible Track

Highlight Invisible Track. Press

C-Right, C-Right. Press and hold L-Shift+R-Shift and press C-Left. Press C-Left, C-Left. Press and hold L-Shift+R-Shift and press C-Right.

Battle Paint Shop

Highlight Battle Paint Shop. Press Z, Z, Z, C-Down, C-Down, C-Down, C-Left, C-Left, C-Left, C-Right, C-Up, C-Left, C-Down.

Invisible Car

Highlight Invisible Car. Press C-Up, C-Down, C-Left, C-Right, L-Shift, R-Shift, Z. There are more codes to unlock, so send them in!

Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX

SLIM JIM, BIKES AND MORE

3. Unlock Slim Jim

On the Rider Select Screen, press Down, Down, Left, Right, Up, Up, Circle. At the end of the list of riders will be Slim Jim.

Unlock All Bikes

On the Bike Select Screen, press Up, Left, Up, Down, Up, Right, Left, Right, Circle. All bikes will be available for you to use.

Unlock All Styles

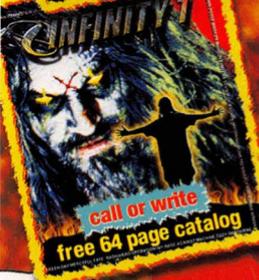
On the Style Select Screen, press Left, Up, Right, Down, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Circle. Every style will now be available.

Duke Nukem: Land of the Bahes

TONS OF CHEATS

From the Main Menu Screen, access the Options. Move down

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WIN OVER \$25,000 IN PRIZES



Have you ever dreamed of owning the ultimate gaming rig or home theater system? Here is your opportunity!! If you win, we give you a budget and you go on a shopping spree. Tailor your package exactly how you want it. We do not want to pick your prizes for you. You get what you want. The packages described below are examples of what you could buy with your winnings.

CONTEST 1 - VIDEO GAMES

Sony Playstation 2, Sega Dreamcast, PS1 and GameCube. Get all four or trade what you don't want for cash. Options include plenty of games, Xbox, Gameboy Advance, accessories and 35" monitor. Base prize package value \$1400.

CONTEST 2 - COMPUTER

700 MHz, 128 mb RAM, 27 gig hard drive, 8X DVD-ROM, CD-RW drive, modem and 17" monitor. Options include software and accessories. Base prize package value \$2600.

CONTEST 3 - HOME THEATER

60" big screen, 100 watt receiver with Dolby Pro Logic Surround Sound, DVD, 200 CD changer, dual tape, Hi-Fi VCR and tower speakers. Options include Satellite TV and camcorder. Base prize package value \$7475.

Make It Happen. All this and more could be yours. In these contests everyone starts out equal. There is no luck involved. You win the prizes by outscoring other players in games of skill. Begin your journey by solving the puzzle below. If you stick it out till the end and have the highest score, you go on a shopping spree and we foot the bill. This first puzzle is easy but it gives you an idea of how the contests work. You will receive full information when you enter. You have been given the opportunity to live your dream. Are you up to it?

Future Puzzles. For each contest you enter, you will receive by mail, four more puzzles at \$2 each and a tie-breaker at \$1. You have three weeks to solve each puzzle. We can not predict the number of entries for each phase. Typically 59% attain the highest score in

phase 1, 47% in phase 2, 39% in phase 3 and 34% in phase 4. The winner will have the highest score after the tie-breaker. Each contest has its own tie-breaker. In the unlikely event that players are still tied, they will split the value of the package they are playing for.

Directions. Follow the directions below to fill in the puzzle. Check the boxes on the entry form to specify the contests you are entering. Add up the entry fees and send that amount with the entry form to the address below. Remember, you can't win if you don't enter. Only one entry per person. Prize totals are described below puzzle. All entries must be post marked by JULY 25, 2001. ALL ENTRY FEES MUST BE PAID IN U.S. FUNDS ONLY. WE WILL NOT ACCEPT CANADIAN CHECKS.

PRIZE PUZZLE

WORD LIST

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| TOWER - P | LEGAL - Y |
| EARTH - X | EMPTY - V |
| WORLD - U | WATER - T |
| SPACE - W | COAST - A |
| HAPPY - O | FIELD - B |
| SHARE - Z | BLADE - D |

DIRECTIONS

Fill in the puzzle with the correct words going across. Transfer each word's corresponding letter to the line at the end. This should spell the secret word going down. HINT: Read the secret word clue.

ENTER ME IN THE FOLLOWING CONTESTS:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (\$3) Video Game | <input type="checkbox"/> (\$3) Home Theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (\$3) Computer | <input type="checkbox"/> (\$5) Enter All Three |

102

Name _____

Mailing Address _____ Apartment # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Area Code _____ Phone Number _____

SEND CASH, MONEY ORDER OR CHECK TO:

ELATION, P.O. BOX 62126 DEPT 953, EDEN PRAIRIE, MN 55344

This puzzle is void where prohibited. Employees of Elation, Inc and its suppliers are ineligible. Judges decisions are final. Where judges are in error the sponsor's liability is limited to the amount of entry fees paid. Elation is not responsible for lost, delayed or stolen mail. Winners will be determined no later than December 31, 2001. This contest is open to residents of the U.S. and Canada only. If you are under 18, you must have parents permission to play. © 2000 Elation, Inc.

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H	A	P	P	Y	O	
	L					
			S			
				L		

SECRET WORD →

SECRET WORD CLUE:

What comes after yesterday but before tomorrow?

Clip This Order Form and Mail It

Value of prize packages as follows: Video Game package \$1400 base prize, bonus options \$250, cash options \$150. Computer package \$2600 base prize, bonus options \$2850, cash options \$1250. Home theater package \$7475 base prize, bonus options \$6375, cash options \$1250. For any questions e-mail us at elation@uswest.net, or call us at 952-826-0033.



TRICKS

TOP 10 TRICKS

(CONTINUED)

3. Pokémon (Yellow)

GAME BOY
COLOR

Easy Level Gain

To easily gain experience, switch the Pokémon you want to train with the top Pokémon on your list. When you go into battle, this Pokémon will appear. Switch to another Pokémon. Once you win the battle, the beginning Pokémon and the fighting Pokémon both gain experience points. This is especially useful if the Pokémon you want to build up has no initial attack in its first form.

4. Driver



Invincibility

Go to the Main Menu/Title Screen and enter the tricks as shown. To activate the cheats, move right until you highlight the police car and then access the Cheats Menu. Then press L2, L2, R2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L1, R2, R1, L2, L1, L1. The Invincibility option will now be unlocked in the Cheats Screen.

5. Pokémon (Red)

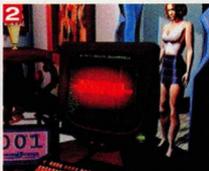
GAME BOY
COLOR

Infinite Items

WARNING: USE THIS TRICK AT YOUR OWN RISK! With this cheat, you can give yourself an unlimited supply of whatever item you have in your sixth inventory slot. Keep in mind that this trick only works in the Red and Blue versions of the game. First, head to Viridian City and talk to the old man who instructed you how to use Poké Balls. When he asks you, choose to watch his demonstration again. After that, immediately fly to Cinnabar Island. Choose one of your Pokémon who has the Surf Ability. Ride up and down the east coast of the island (hugging the shoreline) until you get into a battle.

Eventually, you will encounter one of two glitchy Pokémon, either one with a name made up of scrambled boxes or the infamous Missingno.

Whatever you do, do not catch any Pokémon you encounter here. Repeat: Do not catch any of them. It will



and access Cheats. On the screen are locked versions of most of the codes. Put in the button codes on the Cheats Screen to unlock each one.

Level Select

Circle, X, Square, Square, X, Square, Circle.

Invincibility

L1, Square, Circle, Circle, Square, L1, L2.

All Weapons

R2, X, L1, Square, R1, Circle, L2.

Infinite Ammunition

L2, Circle, R2, Square, Circle, L2, R1.

Double Damage

Square, Square, Square, Circle, Circle, Circle, X.

Temporary Invincibility

L1, L1, L1, L1, L1, L1, R2.

Invisibility

Square, X, Circle, Square, X, Circle, Square.

Full Ego

R1, R1, Circle, Circle, L1, L1, R2.

Full Armor

L1, L1, R1, R1, X, X, Circle, Circle.

First-Person View

L2, R1, L1, R2, Circle, X, Square.

1 Big Head Duke

Square, Square, X, Circle, Circle, X, Square.

Small Head Duke

Square, X, Circle, Circle, X, Square, Square.

Big Head Enemies

X, X, R1, X, L1, X.

Small Head Enemies

X, L1, X, R1, X, X.

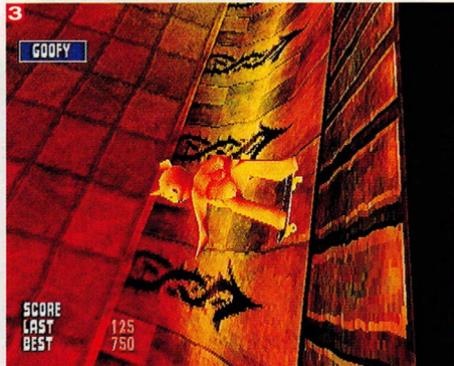
Wacky FMV Sequences

L1, L2, R1, R2, Circle, Circle, Square, Square.

Outtake FMV Sequences

L1, L2, R1, R2, Square, Square, Circle, Circle.

2 Ending FMV Sequence



Circle, R2, L1, Square, L2, X, R2. Unlock Every Cheat

L1, L2, R2, R1, L1, L2, R2, R1, L1, L2, R2, R1, L1, L2, R2, R1, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, X, X, X, X, Square, Square, Square, Square, Select, Select, Select, Select.

MTV Sports: Skateboard

CHEAT PASSWORD

On the Main Menu Screen, pick Single Player. On the next menu, enter Lifestyle. Delete the name on this screen, and put in PASWRD as your name. In Lifestyle mode, you will have access to new boards and outfits. Choose your character and begin the game. Now pause and quit. Go back to the Main Menu and pick Single Player. On the next menu, pick Freeplay. In addition to new boards and outfits, all the hidden skaters and parks will be unlocked!

NFL Blitz 2001

TODAY'S CONTEST CODES

When the "Today's Contest" screen appears, enter codes with the Turbo, Jump and Pass buttons. Press the buttons the number of times shown below, and then press the D-pad in the direction indicated to complete the code. (For example, if the code is 3, 4, 5, Right, you will press Turbo three times, Jump four times, Pass five times and then press Right on the D-pad).

4 Red, White and Blue Football

3, 2, 3, Left
Big Football

- 0, 5, 0, Right
- Fast Passes
- 2, 5, 0, Left
- Infinite Turbo
- 5, 1, 4, Up
- Fast Turbo Running
- 0, 3, 2, Left
- Unlimited Throwing Distance
- 2, 2, 3, Right
- Power-up Offense
- 3, 1, 2, Up
- Power-up Defense
- 4, 2, 1, Up
- Power-up Teammates
- 2, 3, 3, Up
- Super Blitzing
- 0, 4, 5, Up
- Super Field Goals
- 1, 2, 3, Left
- No Interceptions
- 3, 4, 4, Up
- No Random Fumbles
- 4, 2, 3, Down
- No First Downs
- 2, 1, 0, Up
- No Punting
- 1, 5, 1, Up
- Allow Stepping Out of Bounds
- 2, 1, 1, Left
- Power-up Blockers
- 3, 1, 2, Left
- Show Field Goal Percentage
- 0, 0, 1, Down
- Show Punt Hang Meter
- 0, 0, 1, Right
- Hide Receiver Name
- 1, 0, 2, Right
- Invisible Receiver Highlight
- 3, 3, 3, Left
- Invisible

1-900-PRE VIEW

773 8439

The number to call for the latest cheats & gaming info

run your saved game. Run from every battle as soon as you get into one. After running from a battle with a glitch Pokémon, check your inventory. Whatever item was in the sixth slot should have a strange symbol where the quantity used to be. This usually means that you have well over 100 of that item. This trick can be done repeatedly, so you can essentially have infinite items. Now, you can have a ton of Master Balls or enough rare candy to power up all your Pokémon to level 100. Just don't power them up past that because you then run the risk of damaging your saved game.

6. WWF SmackDown!

Hidden Stuff

As you play through an entire season in SmackDown!, you will either unlock secret characters or get extra attribute points for your created wrestler. Here is a list of what you will unlock each year.

1st Year: Ivory
2nd Year: Prince Albert
3rd Year: Jaqueline
4th Year: Viscera
5th Year: 80 points for created wrestlers
6th Year: Mideon
7th Year: Gerald Brisco
8th Year: Pat Patterson
9th Year: 90 points for created wrestlers

7. Pokémon Trading Card

Card Advantage Tip

85 percent of the battles are for four prizes or less. That means you can draw lots of cards with trainers and draw attacks without having to worry about running out of cards in your draw pile yourself. You'll want lots of Professor Oaks and Bills in your Deck. Some of the club leaders use stall Decks designed to run you out of cards. The Gambler trainer is a good substitute for Bill and Oak in these situations. Gambler allows you to shuffle your hand back into your Deck instead of discarding it. You can then flip a coin to draw either one or eight cards. This card can really save you late in the game.

8. Pokémon (Blue)

Fight Safari Zone Pokémon

This will allow you to fight and catch the Safari Zone

4, 3, 3, Up
Big Head

2, 0, 0, Right
Huge Head

0, 4, 0, Up

5 Team Big Players

1, 4, 1, Right

Team Big Heads

2, 0, 3, Right

Team Tiny Players

3, 1, 0, Right

No Play Selection (2P must agree)

1, 1, 5, Left

Show More Field (2P must agree)

0, 2, 1, Right

No CPU Assistance (2P must agree)

0, 1, 2, Down

Power-up Speed (2P must agree)

4, 0, 4, Left

Hyper Blitz (2P must agree)

5, 5, 5, Up

Smart CPU Opponent (1P game only)

3, 1, 4, Down

Deranged Blitz Mode (1P game only)

2, 1, 2, Down

Ultra Hard Mode (1P game only)

3, 2, 3, Up

Super Passing Mode (2P game only)

4, 2, 3, Right

Super Blitz Mode (2P game only)

4, 4, 4, Up

Tournament Mode (2P game only)

1, 1, 1, Down

Always Quarterback (2P teammate required)

2, 2, 2, Left

Always Receiver (2P teammate required)

2, 2, 2, Right

Baseball Stadium

5, 0, 3, Up

Round Snow Stadium

5, 0, 3, Up

Astro Turf Field

3, 0, 1, Up

Ice Field

3, 0, 2, Up

Snow Field

3, 0, 3, Up

Blitz Grass Field

3, 0, 0, Up

Dirt Field

3, 0, 4, Up

Weather: Snow

5, 2, 5, Down

Weather: Clear

2, 1, 2, Left

6 Weather: Rain

5, 5, 5, Right

49ers Playbook

1, 5, 1, Left

Bears Playbook



1, 1, 0, Left

Bengals Playbook

1, 1, 2, Left

Bills Playbook

1, 0, 4, Left

Broncos Playbook

1, 1, 5, Right

Browns Playbook

1, 1, 3, Left

Buccaneers Playbook

1, 5, 4, Left

Cardinals Playbook

1, 0, 1, Left

Chargers Playbook

1, 4, 5, Left

Chiefs Playbook

1, 2, 5, Left

Colts Playbook

1, 2, 3, Up

Cowboys Playbook

1, 1, 4, Left

Dolphins Playbook

1, 3, 1, Left

Eagles Playbook

1, 4, 3, Left

Falcons Playbook

1, 0, 2, Left

Giants Playbook

1, 3, 5, Left

Jaguars Playbook

1, 2, 4, Left

Jets Playbook

1, 4, 1, Left

Lions Playbook

1, 2, 1, Left

Packers Playbook

1, 2, 2, Left

Panthers Playbook

1, 0, 5, Left

Patriots Playbook

1, 3, 3, Left

Raiders Playbook

1, 4, 2, Left

Rams Playbook

1, 5, 3, Left

Ravens Playbook

1, 0, 3, Left

Redskins Playbook

2, 0, 1, Left

Saints Playbook

1, 3, 4, Left

Seahawks Playbook

1, 5, 2, Left

Steelers Playbook

1, 4, 4, Left

Titans Playbook

1, 5, 5, Left

Vikings Playbook

1, 3, 2, Left

NHL 2001 COOL PLAYERS

From the Game Setup Menu, access Advanced Options. On this menu, access Rosters. On



TRICKS

TOP 10 TRICKS

(CONTINUED)

Pokémon outside the Safari Zone. To begin, you must have a Pokémon with the Surf Ability. Now go to the Safari Zone and enter the area where the Pokémon you are trying to catch is found. Stay in the section until the time runs out. Go to the Seafoam Islands by surfing south of Fuchsia City. Be sure you don't encounter any enemies on the way, or the trick won't work (this does not include the Pokémon in the water on the way there). On the edge of the islands, there is a strip of the screen that is half land, and half water. Now, surf on this section and just keep going up and down on it. When you run into an enemy, it will be the Pokémon from the Safari Zone section you just left. This time though, you will be able to fight them and use the other Balls.

9. World Series 2K1

Automatic Batting Aim

This trick will work in the default Rookie Mode setting. When your man is up to bat, move the analog stick slightly in any direction. While keeping a hold on the analog stick, wait until the pitch, and the cursor will automatically follow the ball for perfect aim.

10. Super Mario Bros. Deluxe

Max Out Lives

Go to World 3-1 and get to the end of the level where the staircase of blocks leads up to the end-level flagpole. Two turtles will come down the steps and you'll have to avoid or get rid of the first one.

Now, you will have to get the second turtle shell between one of the blocks and Mario's body by jumping on it to make it bounce off the block and Mario multiple times. Once you do this correctly, your score will increase and eventually turn into 1-Ups! Now you can max out your lives!

the next menu select Player Management. On this screen, choose Create Player. Now, enter the first and last names of the players as shown below for various results.

Superstar Defense

Put in Sandis for the first name and Ozolnsh for the last name, or Chriz for the first name and Pronger for the last name. When it asks if you would like to create a player like him, answer

"Yes." You can change this player's name but don't change any attributes before you save him.

Superstar Forward

Put in Peter for the first name and Forsberg for the last name, or Jaromir for the first name and Jagr for the last name. When it asks if you would like to create a player like him, answer "Yes." You can change this player's name but don't change any attributes before you save him.

Superstar Goalie

Put in Patrick for the first name and Roy for the last name, or Dominik for the first name and Hasek for the last name. When it asks if you would like to create a player like him, answer "Yes." You can change this player's name but don't change any attributes before you save him.

Hammer

Put in Hammer for the first name and any other name for the last name. Put him on one of the teams, and when he plays, the announcer will refer to him as "The Hammer."

Dude

Put in Bruce for the first name and Willis for the last name. Put him on one of the teams, and when he plays, the announcer will refer to him as "Dude."

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

SECRET CODES

From the Main Menu Screen, access Career Mode and choose to continue a career or start a new one. On the Select Player Screen, choose a character and begin your game. In the middle of play, press START to pause the game and then press and hold the L1 button. While holding this button, enter any of these codes to unlock the following features. The screen will shake when each of these tricks

is entered correctly.

Big Head

Square, Circle, Up, Left, Left, Square, Right, Up, Left.

Unlimited Special Meter

X, Triangle, Circle, Up, Left, Triangle, Square.

Fast Motion

Down, Square, Triangle, Right, Up, Circle, Down, Square, Triangle, Right, Up, Circle.

Full Statistics

X, Triangle, Circle, Square, Triangle, Up, Down.

No Blood

Right, Up, Square, Triangle.

Skinny Skater

X, X, X, X, Square, X, X, X, X, Square, X, X, X, Square.

Obese Skater

X, X, X, X, Left, X, X, X, Left, X, X, X, Left.

NeverSoft Pro Skaters

On the Main Menu Screen, press and hold L1. While holding this button, press Up, Square, Square, Triangle, Right, Up, Circle, Triangle. The skate will spin around to confirm the code was entered correctly. Now access the Create Skater Mode. Choose an empty skater slot from the roster and enter any of the following names to automatically create members of the NeverSoft team.

AARON CAMMARATA

RALPH D'AMATO

JOEL JEWETT

CONNOR JEWETT

MICK WEST

JOHNNY OW

NOEL HINES

GARY JESDANUN

RYAN MCMAHON

NOLAN NELSON

SCOTT PEASE

CHRIS RAUSCH

JUNKI SAITA

DARREN THORNE

JASON UYEDA

Driver

STAGE PASSWORDS

From the Main Menu Screen, highlight and choose Undercover. Choose to continue and enter these passwords.

Stage 2: Hide the Evidence

Tire Mark, Police Badge, Pylon, Red Light

Stage 3: Boat Chase

Traffic Light, Key, Key, Blue Light

Stage 4: Ram Raid Race

Pylon, Pylon, Pylon, Police

Badge

Stage 5: Superfly Drive

Key, Red Light, Red Light, Traffic Light

Stage 6: Bait for a Trap

Key, Police Badge, Tire Mark, Blue Light

Stage 7: Take Out Di Angelo

Police Badge, Pylon, Police Badge, Red Light

Stage 8: Steal a Cop Car

Red Light, Police Badge, Key, Tire Mark

Stage 9: Get Lucky to Doctor's

Pylon, Blue Light, Red Light, Red Light

Stage 10: Beverly Hills Getaway

Police Badge, Police Badge, Traffic Light, Pylon

Stage 11: Grand Central Station

Blue Light, Key, Key

Stage 12: Trash Granger's Wheels

Traffic Light, Tire Mark, Red Light, Police Badge

Stage 13: Stop Granger's Gang

Key, Police Badge, Police Badge, Pylon

Stage 14: Chase One of Granger's Boys

Red Light, Blue Light, Red Light, Blue Light.



Spider-Man

SECRET PASSWORDS

From the Main Menu Screen, choose "Continue" and enter these passwords as shown.

Venom Conquered

GVCBF

Lizard Man Conquered

QVCLF

1 The Lab

FGFN



tricks@ziffdavis.com

We want your tricks! We want to include your best codes and tricks in every issue, to go along with all our great tricks we pack in every issue. You can even win drives if we pick yours as Trick of the Month! *see page 233 for contest rules



GAMESHARK CODES

DREAMCAST

ECCO THE DOLPHIN

Enable All Levels
5DD7BFF7FFFFF
803395A0000000F

F355 CHALLENGE

Infinite Time
5B377BFA0000111E
Place 1st - Arcade
1C241A0E00000000
Enable Fiorano
B9E6378A00000001
Enable Nurburgring
1FB41B9600000001
Enable Laguna-Seca
5FC77A500000001
Enable Sepang
A9035C9600000001
Enable Atlanta
D7288ED80000001

NFL BLITZ 2001

Infinite Creation Pts
962802F10000002A
Team 1 Start W/99 Pts
58BA7C45C0705041
58B77C4500000063
Team 2 Start W/99 Pts
31F22F55C0705041
31F12F5500000063

NINTENDO 64

ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES 2

Infinite Health
8135C5180600
Infinite Armor
8135C5180600
All Weapons & Ammo
8115D06E0001
8116368E0001

TUROK 3: SHADOW OF OBLIVION

Infinite Life Force
813334FC0063
Have PS3
8133395A0100
Have Blade
813339440100
Have Cerebral Bore
813339580100
Infinite Arrows
813339280064
Infinite Shotgun Ammo
813339320064
Infinite Firestorm Cannon
Ammo
813339300064

Have Shotgun
813339500100
Have Pistol
8133394A0100
Infinite Grenade Gun Ammo
8133392A0064
Infinite Pistol Ammo
8133392E0064
Have Grenade Launcher
813339540100
Infinite Health
813334FA6400
Have All Secrets
811659C6FFFF
811659C4FFF

PLAYSTATION

DANGER GIRL
Infinite Health
80061B402400
Infinite Pistol Ammo
800EF51803E7
Infinite Pistol Clips
800EF51A03E7
Infinite AK47 Ammo
800EF57803E7
Infinite AK47 Clips
800EF57A03E7
Infinite Sub Machinegun
Ammo 800EF5D803E7
Infinite Sub Machinegun Clips
800EF5D803E7

DAVE MIRRA BMX

Unlock All Hidden Characters
800B60160C03
Extra Time in Proquest
E008BFA9000E
3008BFA900A0
All Movies Unlocked
300B6018003F
300B611C00F
300B6B44000F
All Cheats Unlocked
800B601000FF
Have All Gold Medals
500006010000
800B61090003
500006010000
300B620D0003
500006010000
300B63110003
500006010000
300B64150003
500006010000
300B65190003
500006010000
300B661D0003
500006010000
300B67210003
500006010000

300B68250003
500006010000
300B69290003
500006010000
300B6A2D0003
500006010000
300B6B310003
500006010000
300B6C350003

DINO CRISIS 2

Unlock Characters Extra Mode
800AEACEFFFF
Unlock Extra Dino Mode
800AECA80101
800AECA0101
99 Hit Combo
800AE3700063
Max Score
800AEE10E0FF

GAME BOY

FROGGER 2

Infinite Lives
9109DFC2
Have All Gems Collected
9100B4C2
Max Score
9199E3C2
9199E4C2
9199E5C2

LITTLE MERMAID 2: PINBALL FRENZY

Infinite Balls
0109A1D0
Max Score
010945D6
010946D6
010947D6
010948D6
010949D6
01094AD6
01094BD6

Q*BERT

Beat The Game In Arcade
Mode!
91138DCD
911319C4
Max Score
9199BeCD
9199BD0D
9199BC0D
Infinite Lives
91088BCD

HEY, YOU;
WANNA
WIN FREE
STUFF?

If your trick is selected as Trick of the Month, you will win a free GameShark provided by InterAct, and a Twin Shock, or a Hyper64, or an Advanced Pad, or a DC carrying case from Blaze. If you are given credit for submitting a hot trick in this section, you will win a free game. See page 233 for rules.

Note: If you send your trick by e-mail, you must include your real name and address.

Send your best tricks, codes, Web sites, anything that can help make games more fun or interesting to:

Tricks of the Trade
P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook IL
60522-3338
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e-mail to:

tricks@ziff
davis.com



NEXT MONTH

February 2001

On sale Jan. 9

Something Old, Something New

Old franchises don't die easily. In fact, they're resurging with a vengeance on the PS2. Games such as WipeOut, Tomb Raider, Twisted Metal, Tekken and Ridge Racer had lost some of their luster. We're going to show you how and why they're making a run to regain their glory. Everything old is indeed new again. Also, in the spirit of the elections, we urge you to support your favorite games by picking out the next issue so you can get that coveted ballot for EGM's Reader's Choice Awards.



Namco is lifting the curtain off of Klonoa 2.



ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

- **Special eXclusive...?**
- **More pictures and info on Gran Turismo 3 for PlayStation 2**
- **Klonoa 2 Preview for PlayStation 2**
- **Lunar 2: Eternal Blue Complete Review for PlayStation**
- **Grandia II Review for Dreamcast**
- **Capcom vs. SNK Review for Dreamcast**
- **Breath of Fire IV Review for PlayStation**

*All editorial content is subject to change.

OFFICIAL U.S. PlayStation MAGAZINE

Jan. 2001
On sale Dec. 12

Demo Disc Playables

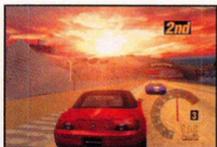
- Spider-Man
- Driver 2: The Wheelman Is Back
- The Grinch
- 102 Dalmatians
- Army Men: Air Attack

Non-Playables

- Medal of Honor Underground

Gran Turismo 3

In January, *OPM* takes a detailed look at what just might be the greatest racing game of all time, Gran Turismo 3. Count on them to help put you behind the wheels of the most exotic cars from around the world. And to help all those procrastinators out there, their guide on the PS2 will put all of the latest news, previews and reviews at your fingertips — no one else will give you this detailed a look at Sony's mega-system. And don't miss the latest news on the *Tomb Raider* flick. Add in all of *OPM*'s usual tricks and strategies and you have the makings of a major issue, and that's not even counting the demo disc!



EXPERT GAMER

Jan. 2001
On sale Dec. 19

Pokémon Time

Texas doesn't have the market cornered on big, as XG blows up the strategy market next month. They'll have full guides on the hottest holiday games, including Medal of Honor Underground, Quake III, NFL Blitz 2001 and Shenmue and part two of their *Zelda* coverage. Also, you may have heard of another little game called Pokémon Gold/Silver. You want to catch all those little critters now, don't you? Be a good little "Readerchu" and pick up the January issue of *Expert Gamer*. You won't be disappointed!

- All you need for Pokémon Gold and Silver
- Super Shenmue guide
- Final maps and tips to get through Majora's Mask
- International Feature
- Ultra-detailed Medal of Honor Underground maps





FINAL WORD

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Kraig Kujawa • kraig_kujawa@ziffdavis.com
Mark MacDonald • mark_macdonald@ziffdavis.com

The PS2 Debut: Stories From The Frontline



James Mielke

Milkman: I went to see the fancy little line they had forming at the Metreon, which by 10:30 a.m. had amounted to two San Franciscan blocks worth of wet people (it had been raining all morning). Resident Sony PR stud, Ryan B., was wearing his official PS2 poncho (read: a plastic bag with the letters "PS2" emblazoned across the back). The crowd outside was the closest thing I've seen to the lines a console launch usually inspires in Japan. The Metreon officially decided to let these people off the hook by putting the PS2s on sale at midnight. So it was an energetic scene. Then again, this is a major metropolis, so I can't speak for what was happening in Boise, Idaho, but out here in San Fran, everywhere was sold out by morning.



Greg Stewart

"...29 winners and I were escorted out by 10 armed cops and security..."



Kraig Kujawa

I myself said thanks but no thanks to all the chaos. I'll wait to get mine when they are plentiful, and there's less drama in obtaining one.

Kraig: I went to a Super K-Mart (by Super, they mean 24 hours), where they raffled off 30 PS2s at midnight. The crowd to get their raffle tickets began around 10 p.m., and the amount of people reached over 600. The scene was pretty rowdy, some guys had coke bottles filled with liquor (you could smell it), while another guy had his baby wrapped in blankets in his shopping cart. There was also plenty of the requisite bored girlfriends waiting for their boyfriend to hurry up and get this stupid thing so they could get home. Anyhow, after waiting about 30 minutes for people to shut their mouths so that the 65-year-old guy could yell the winning numbers loud enough while standing on top of a register (they didn't bother using the intercom), the numbers were read, and I was the second one called. The PS2s were in a customer service area, and as I made my way through the throngs of PS2 suitors, I was called "a dick" by some, and patted on the back by others. When I was finally brought to the PS2 register, a CBS camera crew was there asking questions to the "winners" (the right to give K-Mart \$299+). Afterward, I waited for the lottery to finish since

two of my other friends were there, which was nice because I got to see the announcer accidentally step and fall off of the register, to the concerned (and amused) "ohhhhhhhhs" of the crowd, and see a showing match between security and rowdy raffle ticket holders. Afterward, the other 29 winners and I were escorted out by 10 armed cops and security in a scene similar to the present being pushed into a waiting car by the Secret Service. **Greg:** I promised myself I wouldn't stand in line for a PS2, but excitement got the better of me and I ended up standing in the local Best Buy line by 1 a.m. (Mark wussed out). After a long night following by the lovely Best Buy managers given on a small power trip and making us stand there until 10 a.m. when the store officially opened, we

had to endure a speech about their great two-year warranty and price protection program. Ah well, at least I got one. As for those who didn't, I don't feel too sorry for you. Go buy a Dreamcast. Its Christmas games are still loads better than anything you'll see on the PS2 before March.

Mark: And why did I "wuss" out? Seeing the lineup of PS2 games the night before was a very sobering experience; here it was, the all-powerful PS2 launch lineup right before me, finally for sale, and I realized that the only game I really wanted to play (Ridge Racer V) I already owned for my import machine. I wanted to try out SSX, but wasn't totally convinced it was worth the \$50, much less waiting 12 hours in line for. Still, having a U.S. DVD player would be nice, so I went home, got a couple hours sleep, and got in line at 5 a.m. Three hours later they handed out the tickets and some guy five people ahead of me got the last one (out of about 210); yes, it sucked, it sucked bad. Some of the lucky ticket holders even mocked us as we plodded back to our cars, heads held low. But honestly, I was relieved in a way; I wasn't going to have to sit in the rain for three more hours and I could go home, go to the bathroom, and get some sleep. I experienced the mania, met some very cool people, and got my \$5 coupon. I was happy.



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TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

Features more than 30 characters who have appeared throughout the Tekken series since the first arcade game. Pick your favorite and bring it to the arena, you use the unique strengths of each combatant to annihilate your opponents. A special tag-team mode creates new combinations of attacking never before possible. Sophisticated and highly detailed backgrounds.



PlayStation 2

\$48.95

Namco (Fighter)
Release: NOW
PSX2

'DEAD OR ALIVE'

Drool over lush backgrounds meticulously detailed with the most advanced techniques in lighting and texturing. Multi-tiered fighting stages let you toss your opponents through cathedral windows, over cascading waterfalls, and off towering rooftops to continue the fight below.



PlayStation 2

\$48.95

Teamo (Fighter)
Release: NOW
PSX2

'SUMMONER'

With rings of channeling, you will call forth demons and golems, supernatural servants and elemental creatures. As a young Summoner you'll explore an incredible 3D world filled with many unique characters. Experience jaw dropping spell effects and amazing in-game cinematic.



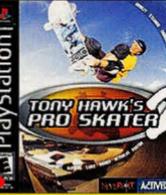
PlayStation 2

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THU (Roleplaying)
Release: NOW
PSX2

'TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2'

Choose from the most comprehensive roster of pro skaters, an increased number of tricks and combinations, including new grabs, grindings, inverts and lip and nollie tricks. You'll need to learn and master these new skills as you work your way up in the rankings.



PlayStation 2

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Activation (Sports)
Release: NOW
PSX

'SPYRO 3: YEAR OF THE DRAGON'

is packed with tons of new features including brand new playable characters, and new mini-games that are a total of 70 huggles to explore as you find gems, fight bad guys, and learn new moves to help on your journey. This is sure to be the best Spyro game yet!



PlayStation 2

\$39.95

Sony (Adventure)
Release: NOW
PSX

'WWF SMACKDOWN 2'

BodySlams, insane action and compelling storylines. Featuring all the top names in the business, "Stone Cold" Steve Austin, The Rock, the Undertaker, Triple H, Kane, and many more. Outstanding graphics and intense action will wow WWF Smackdown 2!



PlayStation 2

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THQ (Sports)
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PSX

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Armada 2 Exodus	11/00	\$48.95	Grand Turismo 2000	01/01	\$48.95	NBA Live 2001	11/00	\$48.95
Armored Core 2	10/00	\$48.95	Grand Turismo	10/00	\$48.95	NBA Showtime NBA/NBC	11/00	\$48.95
Army Men Air Attack 2	12/00	\$48.95	Gun Grizzlies Battle	10/03	\$48.95	NCAA Final Four 2001	11/00	\$48.95
Baldy Gate II	10/00	\$48.95	Hobbes & Dangerous 2	10/00	\$48.95	NCAA Game Breaker 2001	11/00	\$48.95
Blade Runner	12/00	\$48.95	Jungblock	11/00	\$48.95	NHL Game Day 2001	10/00	\$48.95
Bombberman 2001	12/02	\$48.95						
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Drakan	11/00	\$48.95						
Driving Emotion Type 5	10/00	\$48.95						
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ES:PN NBA Tonight	11/00	\$48.95						
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ESPN X Games Snowed Out	11/00	\$48.95						
Eternal Blade	12/00	\$48.95						
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Evolution	11/00	\$48.95						
Extermination	11/00	\$48.95						
FI Champ Season 2K	11/00	\$48.95						
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Final Fantasy 2001	10/00	\$48.95						
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PlayStation 2



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Release: NOW
PSX2

\$49.95

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Alone in the Dark 4	11/00	\$39.95	Outcast of Hazard 2	11/00	\$39.95	Nightmare Creatures 2	05/00	\$39.95
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"A visual dynamo that could best be described as Monkey Island on some weird alien crack..." IGN.com

TEEN
T
Mild Animated Violence
Comic Mischief
Mild Language



Having mastered the forces of inertia, mass, and gravity,
they *still* have absolutely no idea how to get off the planet.



STUPID INVADERS

crash landing
01. 2001

Spiraling through the Cosmos, five aliens have crashed on our fair planet Earth. Their intent? World domination? Enslave our women? Steal our bodily fluids? No, they'd just like to leave. For they are trapped between the clutches of the evil Dr. Sakarin and his deadly hitman. You must help them fashion solutions from strange and savage surroundings. Arm them with bathroom products, used undergarments, and cow dung to get them home. It's the greatest adventure you and five space idiots could possibly imagine.





Yes, you can change your reputation. No, you can't change your clothes.



SKIES OF ARCADIA

You're Vyse, a Blue Rogue pirate. And a well-known ninny. Which sucks. So sail the vast 3D sky in your killer airship. Discover uncharted floating islands. Fight evil pirates. With 70 weapons and 36 magic skills, you'll kick ass by the boatload. You'll be captain of your own ship with 22 crew members. You'll conquer the enemy nation. Then everyone will respect you and call you Vyse the Legend. Which rocks. Unless you don't fight. Then you're just a wuss.

 Dreamcast™

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TEEN
Mild Animated Violence
Suggestive Themes
ESRB
RATED
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